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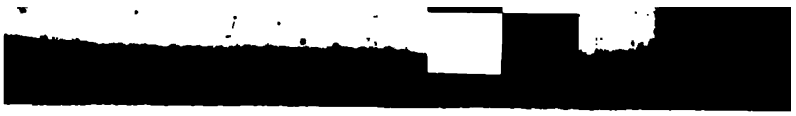

THE

WORKS

OF

LORD BYRON.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.
1823.

LENOX LIBRARY
NEW YORK

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MAZEPPA.

ADVERTISEMENT.

" CELUI qui remplissait alors cette place, était un " gentilhomme Polonais, nommé Mazeppa, né dans le " palatinat de Padolie; il avait été élevé page de Jean " Casimir, et avait pris à sa cour quelque teinture des " belles-lettres. Une intrigue qu'il eut dans sa jeunesse " avec la femme d'un gentilhomme Polonais, ayant été " découverte, le mari le fit lier tout nu sur un cheval " farouche, et le laissa aller en cet état. Le cheval, qui " était du pays de l'Ukraine, y retourna, et y porta " Mazeppa, demi-mort de fatigue et de faim. Quelque " paysans le secoururent: il resta long-tems parmi eux, " et se signala dans plusieurs courses contre les Tartares. " La supériorité de ses lumières lui donna une grande " considération parmi les Cosaques: sa réputation " s'augmentant de jour en jour, obligea le Czar à le " faire Prince de l'Ukraine."—VOLTAIRE, *Histoire de Charles XII.* p. 196.

" Le roi fuyant et poursuivi eut son cheval tué sous " lui; le Colonel Gieta, blessé, et perdant tout sa sang,

" lui donna le sien. Ainsi on remit deux fois à cheval, " dans la suite, ce conquérant qui n'avait puy monter " pendant la bataille."—VOLTAIRE, *Hist. de Charles XII.* p. 216.

" Le roi alla par un autre chemin avec quelques " cavaliers. Le carrosse, où il était, rompit dans la " marche; on le remit à cheval. Pour comble de dis- " grace, il s'égara pendant la nuit dans un bois; là, son " courage ne pouvant plus suppléer à ses forces épuisées, " les douleurs de sa blessure devenues plus insupport- " able par la fatigue, son cheval étant tombé de lassi- " tude, il se coucha quelques heures au pied d'un arbre, " en danger d'être surpris à tout moment par les vain- " queurs qui le cherchaient de tout côtés."—VOLTAIRE, *Histoire de Charles XII.* p. 218.

MAZEPPA.

I.

'Twas after dread Pultowa's day,
When fortune left the royal Swede,
Around a slaughter'd army lay,
No more to combat and to bleed.
The power and glory of the war,
Faithless as their vain votaries, men,
Had pass'd to the triumphant Czar,
And Moscow's walls were safe again,
Until a day more dark and drear,
And a more memorable year,
Should give to slaughter and to shame
A mightier host and haughtier name;
A greater wreck, a deeper fall,
A shock to one—a thunderbolt to all.

II.

Such was the hazard of the die;
The wounded Charles was taught to fly
By day and night through field and flood,
Stain'd with his own and subjects' blood;
For thousands fell that flight to aid:
And not a voice was heard t' upbraid
Ambition in his humbled hour,
When truth had nought to dread from power.
His horse was slain, and Gieta gave
His own—and died the Russians' slave.
This too sinks after many a league
Of well sustain'd, but vain fatigue;
And in the depth of forests, darkling
The watch-fires in the distance sparkling—
The beacons of surrounding foes—
A king must lay his limbs at length.
Are these the laurels and repose
For which the nations strain their strength?
They laid him by a savage tree,
In out-worn nature's agony;
His wounds were stiff—his limbs were stark—
The heavy hour was chill and dark;

The fever in his blood forbade
A transient slumber's fitful aid:
And thus it was; but yet through all,
Kinglike the monarch bore his fall,
And made, in this extreme of ill,
His pangs the vassals of his will;
All silent and subdued were they,
As once the nations round him lay.

III.

A band of chiefs!—alas! how few,
Since but the fleeting of a day
Had thinn'd it; but this wreck was true
And chivalrous: upon the clay
Each sate him down, all sad and mute,
Beside his monarch and his steed,
For danger levels man and brute,
And all are fellows in their need.
Among the rest, Mazeppa made
His pillow in an old oak's shade—
Himself as rough, and scarce less old,
The Ukraine's hetman, calm and bold;
But first, outspent with this long course,
The Cossack prince rubb'd down his horse,

And made for him a leafy bed,
And smooth'd his fetlocks and his mane,
And slack'd his girth, and stripp'd his rein,
And joy'd to see how well he fed;
For until now he had the dread
His wearied courser might refuse
To browse beneath the midnight dews:
But he was hardy as his lord,
And little cared for bed and board;
But spirited and docile too;
Whate'er was to be done, would do.
Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb,
All Tartar-like he carried him;
Obey'd his voice, and came to call,
And knew him in the midst of all:
Though thousands were around,—and Night,
Without a star, pursued her flight,—
That steed from sunset until dawn
His chief would follow like a fawn.

IV.

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,
And laid his lance beneath his oak,
Felt if his arms in order good
The long day's march had well withstood—

If still the powder fill'd the pan,
And flints unloosen'd kept their lock—
His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,
And whether they had chafed his belt—
And next the venerable man,
From out his haversack and can,
Prepared and spread his slender stock;
And to the monarch and his men
The whole or portion offer'd then
With far less of inquietude
Than courtiers at a banquet would.
And Charles of this his slender share
With smiles partook a moment there,
To force of cheer a greater show,
And seem above both wounds and woe;—
And then he said—"Of all our band,
"Though firm of heart and strong of hand,
"In skirmish, march; or forage, none
"Can less have said or more have done
"Than thee, Mazeppa! On the earth
"So fit a pair had never birth,
"Since Alexander's days till now,
"As thy Bucephalus and thou:
"All Scythia's fame to thine should yield
"For pricking on o'er flood and field."

Mazeppa answer'd—" Ill betide
" The school wherein I learn'd to ride!"
Quoth Charles—" Old Hetman, wherefore so,
" Since thou hast learn'd the art so well?"
Mazeppa said—" 'Twere long to tell;
" And we have many a league to go
" With every now and then a blow,
" And ten to one at least the foe,
" Before our steeds may graze at ease
" Beyond the swift Borysthenes:
" And, sire, your limbs have need of rest,
" And I will be the sentinel
" Of this your troop."—" But I request,"
Said Sweden's monarch, " thou wilt tell
" This tale of thine, and I may reap,
" Perchance, from this the boon of sleep,
" For at this moment from my eyes
" The hope of present slumber flies."

" Well, sire, with such a hope, I 'll track
" My seventy years of memory back:
" I think 'twas in my twentieth spring,—
" Ay, 'twas,—when Casimir was king—
" John Casimir,—I was his page
" Six summers in my earlier age;

" A learned monarch, faith! was he,
" And most unlike your majesty:
" He made no wars, and did not gain
" New realms to lose them back again;
" And (save debates in Warsaw's diet)
" He reign'd in most unseemly quiet;
" Not that he had no cares to vex,
" He loved the muses and the sex;
" And sometimes these so froward are,
" They made him wish himself at war;
" But soon his wrath being o'er, he took
" Another mistress, or new book:
" And then he gave prodigious fêtes—
" All Warsaw gather'd round his gates
" To gaze upon his splendid court,
" And dames, and chiefs, of princely port:
" He was the Polish Solomon,
" So sung his poets, all but one,
" Who, being unpension'd, made a satire,
" And boasted that he could not flatter.
" It was a court of jousts and mimes,
" Where every courtier tried at rhymes;
" Even I for once produced some verses,
" And sign'd my odes Despairing Thirsis.

" There was a certain Palatine,
" A count of far and high descent,
" Rich as a salt or silver mine;*
" And he was proud, ye may divine,
" As if from heaven he had been sent:
" He had such wealth in blood and ore
" As few could match beneath the throne;
" And he would gaze upon his store,
" And o'er his pedigree would pore,
" Until by some confusion led,
" Which almost look'd like want of head,
" He thought their merits were his own.
" His wife was not of his opinion—
" His junior she by thirty years—
" Grew daily tired of his dominion;
" And, after wishes, hopes, and fears,
" To virtue a few farewell tears,
" A restless dream or two, some glances
" At Warsaw's youth, some songs, and dances,
" Awaited but the usual chances,
" Those happy accidents which render
" The coldest dames so very tender,

* This comparison of a " *salt* mine" may perhaps be permitted to a Pole, as the wealth of the country consists greatly in the salt mines.

" To deck her Count with titles given,
" 'Tis said, as passports into heaven;
" But, strange to say, they rarely boast
" Of these who have deserved them most.

V.

" I was a goodly stripling then;
" At seventy years I so may say,
" That there were few, or boys or men,
" Who, in my dawning time of day,
" Of vassal or of knight's degree,
" Could vie in vanities with me;
" For I had strength, youth, gaiety,
" A port, not like to this ye see,
" But smooth, as all is rugged now;
" For time, and care, and war, have plough'd
" My very soul from out my brow;
" And thus I should be disavow'd
" By all my kind and kin, could they
" Compare my day and yesterday;
" This change was wrought, too, long ere age
" Had ta'en my features for his page:
" With years, ye know, have not declined
" My strength, my courage, or my mind,

" Or at this hour I should not be
" Telling old tales beneath a tree,
" With starless skies my canopy.
" But let me on; Theresa's form—
" Methinks it glides before me now,
" Between me and yon chestnut's bough,
" The memory is so quick and warm;
" And yet I find no words to tell
" The shape of her I loved so well:
" She had the Asiatic eye,
" Such as our Turkish neighbourhood
" Hath mingled with our Polish blood,
" Dark as above us is the sky;
" But through it stole a tender light,
" Like the first moonrise at midnight;
" Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,
" Which seem'd to melt to its own beam;
" All love, half languor, and half fire,
" Like saints that at the stake expire,
" And lift their raptured looks on high,
" As though it were a joy to die.
" A brow like a midsummer lake,
" Transparent with the sun therein,
" When waves no murmur dare to make,
" And heaven beholds her face within.

" A cheek and lip—but why proceed?
" I loved her then—I love her still;
" And such as I am, love indeed
" In fierce extremes—in good and ill.
" But still we love even in our rage,
" And haunted to our very age
" With the vain shadow of the past,
" As is Mazeppa to the last.

VI.

" We met—we gazed—I saw, and sigh'd,
" She did not speak, and yet replied;
" There are ten thousand tones and signs
" We hear and see, but none defines—
" Involuntary sparks of thought,
" Which strike from out the heart o'erwrought,
" And form a strange intelligence,
" Alike mysterious and intense,
" Which link the burning chain that binds,
" Without their will, young hearts and minds;
" Conveying, as the electric wire,
" We know not how, the absorbing fire.—
" I saw, and sigh'd—in silence wept,
" And still reluctant distance kept,

" Until I was made known to her,
" And we might then and there confer
" Without suspicion—then, even then,
" I long'd, and was resolved to speak;
" But on my lips they died again,
" The accents tremulous and weak,
" Until one hour.—There is a game,
" A frivolous and foolish play,
" Wherewith we while away the day;
" It is—I have forgot the name—
" And we to this, it seems, were set,
" By some strange chance, which I forget:
" I reck'd not if I won or lost,
" It was enough for me to be
" So near to hear, and oh! to see
" The being whom I loved the most.—
" I watch'd her as a sentinel,
" (May ours this dark night watch as well!)
" Until I saw, and thus it was,
" That she was pensive, nor perceived
" Her occupation, nor was grieved
" Nor glad to lose or gain; but still
" Play'd on for hours, as if her will
" Yet bound her to the place, though not
" That hers might be the winning lot.

" Then through my brain the thought did pass
" Even as a flash of lightning there,
" That there was something in her air
" Which would not doom me to despair;
" And on the thought my words broke forth,
" All incoherent as they were—
" Their eloquence was little worth,
" But yet she listen'd—'tis enough—
" Who listens once will listen twice;
" Her heart, be sure, is not of ice,
" And one refusal no rebuff.

VII.

" I loved, and was beloved again—
" They tell me, Sire, you never knew
" Those gentle frailties; if 'tis true,
" I shorten all my joy or pain;
" To you 'twould seem absurd as vain;
" But all men are not born to reign,
" Or o'er their passions, or as you
" Thus o'er themselves and nations too.
" I am—or rather *was*—a prince,
" A chief of thousands, and could lead
" Them on where each would foremost bleed;
" But could not o'er myself evince

" The like control—But to resume:
" I loved, and was beloved again;
" In sooth, it is a happy doom,
" But yet where happiest ends in pain.—
" We met in secret, and the hour
" Which led me to that lady's bower
" Was fiery Expectation's dower.
" My days and nights were nothing—all
" Except that hour, which doth recal
" In the long lapse from youth to age
" No other like itself—I 'd give
" The Ukraine back again to live
" It o'er once more—and be a page,
" The happy page, who was the lord
" Of one soft heart, and his own sword,
" And had no other gem nor wealth
" Save nature's gift of youth and health.—
" We met in secret—doubly sweet,
" Some say, they find it so to meet;
" I know not that—I would have given
" My life but to have call'd her mine
" In the full view of earth and heaven;
" For I did oft and long repine
" That we could only meet by stealth.

VIII.

" For lovers there are many eyes,
" And such there were on us;—the devil
" On such occasions should be civil—
" The devil!—I 'm loth to do him wrong,
" It might be some untoward saint,
" Who would not be at rest too long,
" But to his pious bile gave vent—
" But one fair night, some lurking spies
" Surprised and seized us both.
" The Count was something more than wroth—
" I was unarm'd; but if in steel,
" All cap-à-pie from head to heel,
" What 'gainst their numbers could I do?—
" 'Twas near his castle, far away
" From city or from succour near,
" And almost on the break of day;
" I did not think to see another,
" My moments seem'd reduced to few;
" And with one prayer to Mary Mother,
" And, it may be, a saint or two,
" As I resign'd me to my fate,
" They led me to the castle gate:
" Theresa's doom I never knew,
" Our lot was henceforth separate.—

" An angry man, ye may opine,
" Was he, the proud Count Palatine;
" And he had reason good to be,
" But he was most enraged lest such
" An accident should chance to touch
" Upon his future pedigree;
" Nor less amazed, that such a blot
" His noble 'scutcheon should have got,
" While he was highest of his line;
" Because unto himself he seem'd
" The first of men, nor less he deem'd
" In others' eyes, and most in mine.
" 'S death! with a *page*—perchance a king
" Had reconciled him to the thing;
" But with a stripling of a page—
" I felt—but cannot paint his rage.

IX.

" 'Bring forth the horse!'—the horse was brought;
" In truth, he was a noble steed,
" A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,
" Who look'd as though the speed of thought
" Were in his limbs; but he was wild,
" Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,

" With spur and bridle undefiled—
" 'Twas but a day he had been caught;
" And snorting, with erected mane,
" And struggling fiercely, but in vain,
" In the full foam of wrath and dread
" To me the desert-born was led:
" They bound me on, that menial throng,
" Upon his back with many a thong;
" Then loosed him with a sudden lash—
" Away!—away!—and on we dash!—
" Torrents less rapid and less rash.

X.

" Away!—away!—My breath was gone—
" I saw not where he hurried on:
" 'Twas scarcely yet the break of day,
" And on he foam'd—away!—away!—
" The last of human sounds which rose,
" As I was darted from my foes,
" Was the wild shout of savage laughter,
" Which on the wind came roaring after
" A moment from that rabble rout:
" With sudden wrath I wrench'd my head,
" And snapp'd the cord, which to the mane
" Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,

" And, writhing half my form about,
" Howl'd back my curse; but 'midst the tread,
" The thunder of my courser's speed,
" Perchance they did not hear nor heed:
" It vexes me—for I would fain
" Have paid their insult back again.
" I paid it well in after days:
" There is not of that castle gate,
" Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight,
" Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left;
" Nor of its fields a blade of grass,
" Save what grows on a ridge of wall,
" Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall;
" And many a time ye there might pass,
" Nor dream that e'er that fortress was:
" I saw its turrets in a blaze,
" Their crackling battlements all cleft,
" And the hot lead pour down like rain
" From off the scorch'd and blackening roof,
" Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.
" They little thought that day of pain,
" When lanch'd, as on the lightning's flash,
" They bade me to destruction dash,
" That one day I should come again,

" With twice five thousand horse, to thank
" The Count for his uncourteous ride.
" They play'd me then a bitter prank,
" When, with the wild horse for my guide,
" They bound me to his foaming flank:
" At length I play'd them one as frank—
" For time at last sets all things even—
" And if we do but watch the hour,
" There never yet was human power
" Which could evade, if unforgiven,
" The patient search and vigil long
" Of him who treasures up a wrong.

XI.

" Away, away, my steed and I,
" Upon the pinions of the wind,
" All human dwellings left behind;
" We sped like meteors through the sky,
" When with its crackling sound the night
" Is chequer'd with the northern light:
" Town—village—none were on our track,
" But a wild plain of far extent,
" And bounded by a forest black;
" And, save the scarce seen battlement

" On distant heights of some strong hold,
" Against the Tartars built of old,
" No trace of man. The year before
" A Turkish army had march'd o'er;
" And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,
" The verdure flies the bloody sod:—
" The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,
" And a low breeze crept moaning by—
" I could have answer'd with a sigh—
" But fast we fled, away, away—
" And I could neither sigh nor pray;
" And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain
" Upon the courser's bristling mane;
" But, snorting still with rage and fear,
" He flew upon his far career:
" At times I almost thought, indeed,
" He must have slacken'd in his speed;
" But no—my bound and slender frame
" Was nothing to his angry might,
" And merely like a spur became:
" Each motion which I made to free
" My swoln limbs from their agony
" Increased his fury and affright:
" I tried my voice,—'twas faint and low,
" But yet he swerved as from a blow;

" And, starting to each accent, sprang
" As from a sudden trumpet's clang:
" Meantime my cords were wet with gore,
" Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er;
" And in my tongue the thirst became
" A something fierier far than flame.

XII.

" We near'd the wild wood—'twas so wide,
" I saw no bounds on either side;
" 'Twas studded with old sturdy trees,
" That bent not to the roughest breeze
" Which howls down from Siberia's waste,
" And strips the forest in its haste,—
" But these were few, and far between
" Set thick with shrubs more young and green,
" Luxuriant with their annual leaves,
" Ere strown by those autumnal eves
" That nip the forest's foliage dead,
" Discolour'd with a lifeless red,
" Which stands thereon like stiffen'd gore
" Upon the slain when battle's o'er,
" And some long winter's night hath shed
" Its frost o'er every tombless head,

" So cold and stark the raven's beak
" May peck unpierced each frozen cheek:
" 'Twas a wild waste of underwood,
" And here and there a chestnut stood,
" The strong oak, and the hardy pine;
" But far apart—and well it were,
" Or else a different lot were mine—
" The boughs gave way, and did not tear
" My limbs; and I found strength to bear
" My wounds, already scarr'd with cold—
" My bonds forbade to loose my hold.
" We rustled through the leaves like wind,
" Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind;
" By night I heard them on the track,
" Their troop came hard upon our back,
" With their long gallop, which can tire
" The hound's deep hate, and hunter's fire:
" Where'er we flew they follow'd on,
" Nor left us with the morning sun;
" Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,
" At day-break winding through the wood,
" And through the night had heard their feet
" Their stealing, rustling step repeat.
" O! how I wish'd for spear or sword,
" At least to die amidst the horde,

" And perish—if it must be so—
" At bay, destroying many a foe.
" When first my courser's race begun,
" I wish'd the goal already won;
" But now I doubted strength and speed.
" Vain doubt! his swift and savage breed
" Had nerved him like the mountain-roe;
" Nor faster falls the blinding snow
" Which whelms the peasant near the door
" Whose threshold he shall cross no more,
" Bewilder'd with the dazzling blast,
" Than through the forest-paths he past—
" Untired, untamed, and worse than wild;
" All furious as a favour'd child
" Balk'd of its wish; or fiercer still—
" A woman piqued—who has her will.

XIII.

" The wood was past; 'twas more than noon,
" But chill the air, although in June;
" Or it might be my veins ran cold—
" Prolong'd endurance tames the bold;
" And I was then not what I seem,
" But headlong as a wintry stream,

" And wore my feelings out before
" I well could count their causes o'er:
" And what with fury, fear, and wrath,
" The tortures which beset my path,
" Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,
" Thus bound in nature's nakedness;
" Sprung from a race whose rising blood
" When stirr'd beyond its calmer mood,
" And trodden hard upon, is like
" The rattle-snake's, in act to strike,
" What marvel if this worn-out trunk
" Beneath its woes a moment sunk?
" The earth gave way, the skies roll'd round,
" I seem'd to sink upon the ground;
" But err'd, for I was fastly bound.
" My heart turn'd sick, my brain grew sore,
" And throbb'd awhile, then beat no more:
" The skies spun like a mighty wheel;
" I saw the trees like drunkards reel,
" And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,
" Which saw no farther: he who dies
" Can die no more than then I died.
" O'ertortured by that ghastly ride,

" I felt the blackness come and go,
" And strove to wake; but could not make
" My senses climb up from below:
" I felt as on a plank at sea,
" When all the waves that dash o'er thee,
" At the same time upheave and whelm,
" And hurl thee towards a desert realm.
" My undulating life was as
" The fancied lights that flitting pass
" Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when
" Fever begins upon the brain;
" But soon it pass'd, with little pain,
" But a confusion worse than such:
" I own that I should deem it much,
" Dying, to feel the same again;
" And yet I do suppose we must
" Feel far more ere we turn to dust:
" No matter; I have bared my brow
" Full in Death's face—before—and now.

XIV.

" My thoughts came back; where was I? Cold,
" And numb, and giddy: pulse by pulse
" Life reassumed its lingering hold,

" And throb by throb; till grown a pang
" Which for a moment would convulse,
" My blood reflow'd, though thick and chill;
" My ear with uncouth noises rang,
" My heart began once more to thrill;
" My sight return'd, though dim, alas!
" And thicken'd, as it were, with glass.
" Methought the dash of waves was nigh;
" There was a gleam too of the sky,
" Studded with stars;—it is no dream;
" The wild horse swims the wilder stream!
" The bright broad river's gushing tide
" Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,
" And we are half-way, struggling o'er
" To yon unknown and silent shore.
" The waters broke my hollow trance,
" And with a temporary strength
" My stiffen'd limbs were rebaptized.
" My courser's broad breast proudly braves,
" And dashes off the ascending waves,
" And onward we advance!
" We reach the slippery shore at length,
" A haven I but little prized,
" For all behind was dark and drear,
" And all before was night and fear.

" How many hours of night or day
" In those suspended pangs I lay,
" I could not tell; I scarcely knew
" If this were human breath I drew.

XV.

" With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
" And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
" The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain
" Up the repelling bank.
" We gain the top: a boundless plain
" Spreads through the shadow of the night,
" And onward, onward, onward, seems
" Like precipices in our dreams,
" To stretch beyond the sight;
" And here and there a speck of white,
" Or scatter'd spot of dusky green,
" In masses broke into the light,
" As rose the moon upon my right.
" But nought distinctly seen
" In the dim waste, would indicate
" The omen of a cottage gate;
" No twinkling taper from afar
" Stood like an hospitable star;

" Not even an ignis-fatuus rose
" To make him merry with my woes:
" That very cheat had cheer'd me then!
" Although detected, welcome still,
" Reminding me, through every ill,
" Of the abodes of men.

XVI.

" Onward we went—but slack and slow;
" His savage force at length o'erspent,
" The drooping courser, faint and low,
" All feebly foaming went.
" A sickly infant had had power
" To guide him forward in that hour;
" But useless all to me.
" His new-born tameness nought avail'd,
" My limbs were bound; my force had fail'd,
" Perchance, had they been free.
" With feeble effort still I tried
" To rend the bonds so starkly tied—
" But still it was in vain;
" My limbs were only wrung the more,
" And soon the idle strife gave o'er,
" Which but prolong'd their pain:

" The dizzy race seem'd almost done,
" Although no goal was nearly won:
" Some streaks announced the coming sun—
  " How slow, alas! he came!
" Methought that mist of dawning gray
" Would never dapple into day;
" How heavily it roll'd away—
  " Before the eastern flame
" Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,
" And call'd the radiance from their cars,
" And fill'd the earth, from his deep throne,
" With lonely lustre, all his own.

XVII.

" Up rose the sun; the mists were curl'd
" Back from the solitary world
" Which lay around—behind—before:
" What booted it to traverse o'er
" Plain, forest, river? Man nor brute,
" Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,
" Lay in the wild luxuriant soil;
" No sign of travel—none of toil;
" The very air was mute;

" And not an insect's shrill small horn,
" Nor matin bird's new voice was borne
" From herb nor thicket. Many a werst,
" Panting as if his heart would burst,
" The weary brute still stagger'd on;
" And still we were—or seem'd—alone:
" At length, while reeling on our way,
" Methought I heard a courser neigh,
" From out yon tuft of blackening firs.
" Is it the wind those branches stirs?
" No, no! from out the forest prance
" A trampling troop; I see them come!
" In one vast squadron they advance!
" I strove to cry—my lips were dumb.
" The steeds rush on in plunging pride;
" But where are they the reins to guide?
" A thousand horse—and none to ride!
" With flowing tail, and flying mane,
" Wide nostrils—never stretch'd by pain,
" Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,
" And feet that iron never shod,
" And flanks unscarr'd by spur or rod,
" A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
" Like waves that follow o'er the sea,

" Came thickly thundering on,
" As if our faint approach to meet;
" The sight re-nerved my courser's feet,
" A moment staggering, feebly fleet,
" A moment, with a faint low neigh,
" He answer'd, and then fell;
" With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,
" And reeking limbs immoveable,
" His first and last career is done!
" On came the troop—they saw him stoop,
" They saw me strangely bound along
" His back with many a bloody thong:
" They stop—they start—they snuff the air,
" Gallop a moment here and there,
" Approach, retire, wheel round and round,
" Then plunging back with sudden bound,
" Headed by one black mighty steed,
" Who seem'd the patriarch of his breed,
" Without a single speck or hair
" Of white upon his shaggy hide;
" They snort—they foam—neigh—swerve aside,
" And backward to the forest fly,
" By instinct, from a human eye.—
" They left me there, to my despair,

" Link'd to the dead and stiffening wretch,
" Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,
" Relieved from that unwonted weight,
" From whence I could not extricate
" Nor him nor me—and there we lay,
" The dying on the dead!
" I little deem'd another day
" Would see my houseless, helpless head.

" And there from morn till twilight bound,
" I felt the heavy hours toil round,
" With just enough of life to see
" My last of suns go down on me,
" In hopeless certainty of mind,
" That makes us feel at length resign'd
" To that which our foreboding years
" Presents the worst and last of fears
" Inevitable—even a boon,
" Nor more unkind for coming soon;
" Yet shunn'd and dreaded with such care,
" As if it only were a snare
" That prudence might escape:
" At times both wish'd for and implored,
" At times sought with self-pointed sword,

" Yet still a dark and hideous close
" To even intolerable woes,
" And welcome in no shape.
" And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure,
" They who have revell'd beyond measure
" In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,
" Die calm, or calmer, oft than he
" Whose heritage was misery:
" For he who hath in turn run through
" All that was beautiful and new,
" Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave;
" And, save the future (which is view'd
" Not quite as men are base or good,
" But as their nerves may be endued),
" With nought perhaps to grieve:—
" The wretch still hopes his woes must end,
" And Death, whom he should deem his friend,
" Appears, to his distemper'd eyes,
" Arrived to rob him of his prize,
" The tree of his new Paradise.
" To-morrow would have given him all,
" Repaid his pangs, repair'd his fall;
" To-morrow would have been the first
" Of days no more deplored or curst,

" But bright, and long, and beckoning years,
" Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,
" Guerdon of many a painful hour;
" To-morrow would have given him power
" To rule, to shine, to smite, to save—
" And must it dawn upon his grave?

XVIII.

" The sun was sinking—still I lay
" Chain'd to the chill and stiffening steed,
" I thought to mingle there our clay;
" And my dim eyes of death had need,
" No hope arose of being freed:
" I cast my last looks up the sky,
" And there between me and the sun
" I saw the expecting raven fly,
" Who scarce would wait till both should die,
" Ere his repast begun;
" He flew, and perch'd, then flew once more,
" And each time nearer than before;
" I saw his wing through twilight flit,
" And once so near me he alit
" I could have smote, but lack'd the strength;
" But the slight motion of my hand,
" And feeble scratching of the sand,

" The exerted throat's faint struggling noise,
" Which scarcely could be call'd a voice,
" Together scared him off at length.—
" I know no more—my latest dream
" Is something of a lovely star
" Which fix'd my dull eyes from afar,
" And went and came with wandering beam,
" And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense
" Sensation of recurring sense,
" And then subsiding back to death,
" And then again a little breath,
" A little thrill, a short suspense,
" An icy sickness curdling o'er
" My heart, and sparks that cross'd my brain—
" A gasp, a throb, a start of pain,
" A sigh, and nothing more.

XIX.

" I woke—Where was I?—Do I see
" A human face look down on me?
" And doth a roof above me close?
" Do these limbs on a couch repose?
" Is this a chamber where I lie?
" And is it mortal yon bright eye,

" That watches me with gentle glance?
" I closed my own again once more,
" As doubtful that the former trance
" Could not as yet be o'er.
" A slender girl, long-hair'd, and tall,
" Sate watching by the cottage wall;
" The sparkle of her eye I caught,
" Even with my first return of thought;
" For ever and anon she threw
" A prying, pitying glance on me
" With her black eyes so wild and free:
" I gazed, and gazed, until I knew
" No vision it could be,—
" But that I lived, and was released
" From adding to the vulture's feast:
" And when the Cossack maid beheld
" My heavy eyes at length unseal'd,
" She smiled—and I essay'd to speak,
" But fail'd—and she approach'd, and made
" With lip and finger signs that said,
" I must not strive as yet to break
" The silence, till my strength should be
" Enough to leave my accents free;
" And then her hand on mine she laid,

" And smooth'd the pillow for my head,
" And stole along on tiptoe tread,
" And gently oped the door, and spake
" In whispers—ne'er was voice so sweet!
" Even music follow'd her light feet;—
" But those she call'd were not awake,
" And she went forth; but, ere she pass'd,
" Another look on me she cast,
" Another sign she made, to say,
" That I had nought to fear, that all
" Were near, at my command or call,
" And she would not delay
" Her due return:—while she was gone,
" Methought I felt too much alone.

XX.

" She came with mother and with sire—
" What need of more?—I will not tire
" With long recital of the rest,
" Since I became the Cossack's guest:
" They found me senseless on the plain—
" They bore me to the nearest hut—
" They brought me into life again—
" Me—one day o'er their realm to reign!

" Thus the vain fool who strove to glut
" His rage, refining on my pain,
" Sent me forth to the wilderness,
" Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,
" To pass the desert to a throne,—
" What mortal his own doom may guess?—
" Let none despond, let none despair!
" To-morrow the Borysthenes
" May see our coursers graze at ease
" Upon his Turkish bank,—and never
" Had I such welcome for a river
" As I shall yield when safely there.
" Comrades, good night!"—The Hetman threw
His length beneath the oak-tree shade,
With leafy couch already made,
A bed nor comfortless nor new
To him, who took his rest whene'er
The hour arrived, no matter where:—
His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.
And if ye marvel Charles forgot
To thank his tale, *he* wonder'd not,—
The king had been an hour asleep.

MANFRED,

A DRAMATIC POEM.

" There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
" Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Manfred.

Chamois Hunter.

Abbot of St. Maurice.

Manuel.

Herman.

Witch of the Alps.

Arimanes.

Nemesis.

The Destinies.

Spirits, &c.

The Scene of the Drama is amongst the Higher Alps—partly in the Castle of Manfred, and partly in the Mountains.

MANFRED.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

MANFRED *alone—Scene, a Gothic gallery—Time, Midnight.*

MAN. THE lamp must be replenish'd, but even then
It will not burn so long as I must watch:
My slumbers—if I slumber—are not sleep,
But a continuance of enduring thought,
Which then I can resist not: in my heart
There is a vigil, and these eyes but close
To look within; and yet I live, and bear
The aspect and the form of breathing men.
But grief should be the instructor of the wise;
Sorrow is knowledge: they who know the most

Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth,
The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life.
Philosophy and science, and the springs
Of wonder, and the wisdom of the world,
I have essay'd, and in my mind there is
A power to make these subject to itself—
But they avail not: I have done men good,
And I have met with good even among men—
But this avail'd not: I have had my foes,
And none have baffled, many fallen before me—
But this avail'd not:—Good, or evil, life,
Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,
Have been to me as rain unto the sands,
Since that all-nameless hour. I have no dread,
And feel the curse to have no natural fear,
Nor fluttering throb, that beats with hopes or wishes,
Or lurking love of something on the earth.—
Now to my task.—
Mysterious Agency!
Ye spirits of the unbounded Universe!
Whom I have sought in darkness and in light—
Ye, who do compass earth about, and dwell
In subtler essence—ye, to whom the tops
Of mountains inaccessible are haunts,

And earth's and ocean's caves familiar things—
I call upon ye by the written charm
Which gives me power upon you——Rise! appear!

[*A pause.*

They come not yet.—Now by the voice of him
Who is the first among you—by this sign,
Which makes you tremble—by the claims of him
Who is undying,—Rise! appear!——Appear!

[*A pause.*

If it be so.—Spirits of earth and air,
Ye shall not thus elude me: by a power,
Deeper than all yet urged, a tyrant-spell,
Which had its birthplace in a star condemn'd,
The burning wreck of a demolish'd world,
A wandering hell in the eternal space;
By the strong curse which is upon my soul,
The thought which is within me and around me,
I do compel ye to my will.—Appear!

[*A star is seen at the darker end of the gallery; it is stationary; and a voice is heard singing.*]

FIRST SPIRIT.

Mortal! to thy bidding bow'd,
From my mansion in the cloud,

Which the breath of twilight builds,
And the summer's sun-set gilds
With the azure and vermilion,
Which is mix'd for my pavilion;
Though thy quest may be forbidden,
On a star-beam I have ridden;
To thine adjuration bow'd,
Mortal—be thy wish avow'd!

Voice of the SECOND SPIRIT.

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains,
They crown'd him long ago
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow.
Around his waist are forests braced,
The Avalanche in his hand;
But ere it fall, that thundering ball
Must pause for my command.
The Glacier's cold and restless mass
Moves onward day by day;
But I am he who bids it pass,
Or with its ice delay.
I am the spirit of the place,
Could make the mountain bow

And quiver to his cavern'd base—
And what with me wouldst *Thou?*

Voice of the THIRD SPIRIT.

In the blue depth of the waters,
Where the wave hath no strife,
Where the wind is a stranger,
And the sea-snake hath life,
Where the Mermaid is decking
Her green hair with shells;
Like the storm on the surface
Came the sound of thy spells;
O'er my calm Hall of Coral
The deep echo roll'd—
To the Spirit of Ocean
Thy wishes unfold!

FOURTH SPIRIT.

Where the slumbering earthquake
Lies pillow'd on fire,
And the lakes of bitumen
Rise boilingly higher;
Where the roots of the Andes
Strike deep in the earth,

As their summits to heaven
Shoot soaringly forth;
I have quitted my birthplace,
Thy bidding to bide—
Thy spell hath subdued me,
Thy will be my guide!

FIFTH SPIRIT.

I am the Rider of the wind,
The Stirrer of the storm;
The hurricane I left behind
Is yet with lightning warm;
To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea
I swept upon the blast:
The fleet I met sail'd well, and yet
'Twill sink ere night be past.

SIXTH SPIRIT.

My dwelling is the shadow of the night,
Why doth thy magic torture me with light?

SEVENTH SPIRIT.

The star which rules thy destiny,
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me:

It was a world as fresh and fair
As e'er revolved round sun in air;
Its course was free and regular,
Space bosom'd not a lovelier star.
The hour arrived—and it became
A wandering mass of shapeless flame,
A pathless comet, and a curse,
The menace of the universe;
Still rolling on with innate force,
Without a sphere, without a course,
A bright deformity on high,
The monster of the upper sky!
And thou! beneath its influence born—
Thou worm! whom I obey and scorn—
Forced by a power (which is not thine,
And lent thee but to make thee mine)
For this brief moment to descend,
Where these weak spirits round thee bend
And parley with a thing like thee—
What wouldst thou, Child of Clay! with me?

The SEVEN SPIRITS.

Earth, ocean, air, night, mountains, winds, thy star,
Are at thy beck and bidding, Child of Clay!

Before thee at thy quest their spirits are—
What wouldst thou with us, son of mortals—say?

MAN. Forgetfulness——

FIRST SPIRIT. Of what—of whom—and why?

MAN. Of that which is within me; read it there—
Ye know it, and I cannot utter it.

SPIRIT. We can but give thee that which we possess:
Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the power
O'er earth, the whole, or portion, or a sign
Which shall control the elements, whereof
We are the dominators, each and all,
These shall be thine.

MAN. Oblivion, self-oblivion—
Can ye not wring from out the hidden realms
Ye offer so profusely what I ask?

SPIRIT. It is not in our essence, in our skill;
But—thou mayst die.

MAN. Will death bestow it on me?

SPIRIT. We are immortal, and do not forget;
We are eternal; and to us the past
Is, as the future, present. Art thou answer'd?

MAN. Ye mock me—but the power which brought ye here

Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not at my will!
The mind, the spirit, the Promethean spark,
The lightning of my being, is as bright,
Pervading, and far-darting as your own,
And shall not yield to yours, though coop'd in clay!
Answer, or I will teach ye what I am.

SPIRIT. We answer as we answer'd; our reply
Is even in thine own words.

MAN. Why say ye so?

SPIRIT. If, as thou say'st, thine essence be as ours,
We have replied in telling thee, the thing
Mortals call death hath nought to do with us.

MAN. I then have call'd ye from your realms in vain;
Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.

SPIRIT. Say;
What we possess we offer; it is thine:
Bethink ere thou dismiss us, ask again—
Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and length of days——

MAN. Accursed! what have I to do with days?
They are too long already.—Hence—begone!

SPIRIT. Yet pause: being here, our will would do thee service;
Bethink thee, is there then no other gift
Which we can make not worthless in thine eyes?

MAN. No, none: yet stay—one moment, ere we part—
I would behold ye face to face. I hear
Your voices, sweet and melancholy sounds,
As music on the waters; and I see
The steady aspect of a clear large star;
But nothing more. Approach me as ye are,
Or one, or all, in your accustom'd forms.

SPIRIT. We have no forms beyond the elements
Of which we are the mind and principle:
But choose a form—in that we will appear.

MAN. I have no choice; there is no form on earth
Hideous or beautiful to me. Let him,
Who is most powerful of ye, take such aspect
As unto him may seem most fitting.—Come!

SEVENTH SPIRIT. (*Appearing in the shape of a beautiful female figure.*) Behold!

MAN. Oh God! if it be thus, and *thou*
Art not a madness and a mockery,
I yet might be most happy.—I will clasp thee,
And we again will be—— [*The figure vanishes.*
My heart is crush'd!
[MANFRED *falls senseless.*

(*A voice is heard in the Incantation which follows.*)

When the moon is on the wave,
And the glow-worm in the grass,
And the meteor on the grave,
And the wisp on the morass;
When the falling stars are shooting,
And the answer'd owls are hooting,
And the silent leaves are still
In the shadow of the hill,
Shall my soul be upon thine,
With a power and with a sign.

Though thy slumber may be deep,
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep,
There are shades which will not vanish,
There are thoughts thou canst not banish;
By a power to thee unknown,
Thou canst never be alone;
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
Thou art gather'd in a cloud;
And for ever shalt thou dwell
In the spirit of this spell.

Though thou seest me not pass by,
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye
As a thing that, though unseen,
Must be near thee, and hath been;
And when in that secret dread
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,
Thou shalt marvel I am not
As thy shadow on the spot,
And the power which thou dost feel
Shall be what thou must conceal.

And a magic voice and verse
Hath baptized thee with a curse;
And a spirit of the air
Hath begirt thee with a snare;
In the wind there is a voice
Shall forbid thee to rejoice;
And to thee shall Night deny
All the quiet of her sky;
And the day shall have a sun,
Which shall make thee wish it done.

From thy false tears I did distil
An essence which hath strength to kill;

From thy own heart I then did wring
The black blood in its blackest spring;
From thy own smile I snatch'd the snake,
For there it coil'd as in a brake;
From thy own lip I drew the charm
Which gave all these their chiefest harm;
In proving every poison known,
I found the strongest was thine own.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,
By that most seeming virtuous eye,
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy;
By the perfection of thine art
Which pass'd for human thine own heart;
By thy delight in others' pain,
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
I call upon thee! and compel
Thyself to be thy proper Hell!

And on thy head I pour the vial
Which doth devote thee to this trial;
Nor to slumber, nor to die,
Shall be in thy destiny;

Though thy death shall still seem near
To thy wish, but as a fear;
Lo! the spell now works around thee,
And the clankless chain hath bound thee;
O'er thy heart and brain together
Hath the word been pass'd—now wither!

SCENE II.

The Mountain of the Jungfrau.—Time, Morning.— MANFRED *alone upon the Cliffs.*

MAN. The spirits I have raised abandon me—
The spells which I have studied baffle me—
The remedy I reck'd of tortured me;
I lean no more on super-human aid,
It hath no power upon the past, and for
The future, till the past be gulf'd in darkness,
It is not of my search.—My mother Earth!
And thou fresh breaking Day, and you, ye Mountains,
Why are ye beautiful? I cannot love ye.
And thou, the bright eye of the universe,
That openest over all, and unto all

Art a delight—thou shin'st not on my heart.
And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme edge
I stand, and on the torrent's brink beneath
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to shrubs
In dizziness of distance; when a leap,
A stir, a motion, even a breath, would bring
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed
To rest for ever—wherefore do I pause?
I feel the impulse—yet I do not plunge;
I see the peril—yet do not recede;
And my brain reels—and yet my foot is firm:
There is a power upon me which withholds,
And makes it my fatality to live;
If it be life to wear within myself
This barrenness of spirit, and to be
My own soul's sepulchre, for I have ceased
To justify my deeds unto myself—
The last infirmity of evil. Ay,
Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minister,

[*An eagle passes.*

Whose happy flight is highest into heaven,
Well may'st thou swoop so near me—I should be
Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets; thou art gone
Where the eye cannot follow thee; but thine

Yet pierces downward, onward, or above
With a pervading vision.—Beautiful!
How beautiful is all this visible world!
How glorious in its action and itself!
But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we,
Half dust, half deity, alike unfit
To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence make
A conflict of its elements, and breathe
The breath of degradation and of pride,
Contending with low wants and lofty will
Till our mortality predominates,
And men are—what they name not to themselves,
And trust not to each other. Hark! the note,

[*The Shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard.*

The natural music of the mountain reed—
For here the patriarchal days are not
A pastoral fable—pipes in the liberal air,
Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;
My soul would drink those echoes.—Oh, that I were
The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,
A living voice, a breathing harmony,
A bodiless enjoyment—born and dying
With the blest tone which made me!

Enter from below a CHAMOIS HUNTER.

CHAMOIS HUNTER. Even so
This way the chamois leapt: her nimble feet
Have baffled me; my gains to-day will scarce
Repay my break-neck travail.—What is here?
Who seems not of my trade, and yet hath reach'd
A height which none even of our mountaineers,
Save our best hunters, may attain: his garb
Is goodly, his mien manly, and his air
Proud as a free-born peasant's, at this distance.—
I will approach him nearer.

MAN. (*not perceiving the other.*) To be thus—
Gray-hair'd with anguish, like these blasted pines,
Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless,
A blighted trunk upon a cursed root,
Which but supplies a feeling to decay—
And to be thus, eternally but thus,
Having been otherwise! Now furrow'd o'er
With wrinkles, plough'd by moments, not by years;
And hours—all tortured into ages—hours
Which I outlive!—Ye toppling crags of ice!
Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws down
In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me!
I hear ye momently above, beneath,

Crash with a frequent conflict; but ye pass,
And only fall on things that still would live;
On the young flourishing forest, or the hut
And hamlet of the harmless villager.

C. Hun. The mists begin to rise from up the valley;
I'll warn him to descend, or he may chance
To lose at once his way and life together.

Man. The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds
Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,
Like foam from the roused ocean of deep Hell,
Whose every wave breaks on a living shore,
Heap'd with the damn'd like pebbles.—I am giddy.

C. Hun. I must approach him cautiously; if near,
A sudden step will startle him, and he
Seems tottering already.

Man. Mountains have fallen,
Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the shock
Rocking their Alpine brethren; filling up
The ripe green valleys with destruction's splinters;
Damming the rivers with a sudden dash,
Which crush'd the waters into mist, and made
Their fountains find another channel—thus,
Thus, in its old age, did Mount Rosenberg—
Why stood I not beneath it?

C. HUN. Friend! have a care,
Your next step may be fatal!—for the love
Of him who made you, stand not on that brink!

MAN. (*not hearing him.*) Such would have been for me a fitting tomb;
My bones had then been quiet in their depth;
They had not then been strewn upon the rocks
For the wind's pastime—as thus—thus they shall be—
In this one plunge.—Farewell, ye opening heavens!
Look not upon me thus reproachfully—
Ye were not meant for me—Earth! take these atoms!

(*As* MANFRED *is in act to spring from the cliff, the* CHAMOIS HUNTER *seizes and retains him with a sudden grasp.*)

C. HUN. Hold, madman!—though aweary of thy life,
Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty blood.—
Away with me——I will not quit my hold.

MAN. I am most sick at heart—nay, grasp me not—
I am all feebleness—the mountains whirl
Spinning around me—I grow blind—What art thou?

C. HUN. I'll answer that anon.—Away with me—
The clouds grow thicker—there—now lean on me—
Place your foot here—here, take this staff, and cling
A moment to that shrub—now give me your hand,

And hold fast by my girdle—softly—well—
The Chalet will be gain'd within an hour—
Come on, we'll quickly find a surer footing,
And something like a pathway, which the torrent
Hath wash'd since winter.—Come, 'tis bravely done—
You should have been a hunter.—Follow me.

(*As they descend the rocks with difficulty, the scene closes.*)

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Cottage amongst the Bernese Alps.

MANFRED *and the* CHAMOIS HUNTER.

C. HUN. No, no—yet pause—thou must not yet go forth:
Thy mind and body are alike unfit
To trust each other, for some hours, at least;
When thou art better, I will be thy guide—
But whither?

MAN. It imports not: I do know
My route full well, and need no further guidance.

C. HUN. Thy garb and gait bespeak thee of high lineage—
One of the many chiefs, whose castled crags
Look o'er the lower valleys—which of these
May call thee lord? I only know their portals;
My way of life leads me but rarely down
To bask by the huge hearths of those old halls,
Carousing with the vassals; but the paths,

Which step from out our mountains to their doors,
I know from childhood—which of these is thine?

MAN. No matter.

C. HUN. Well, sir, pardon me the question,
And be of better cheer. Come, taste my wine;
'Tis of an ancient vintage; many a day
'T has thaw'd my veins among our glaciers, now
Let it do thus for thine—Come, pledge me fairly.

MAN. Away, away! there's blood upon the brim!
Will it then never—never sink in the earth?

C. HUN. What dost thou mean? thy senses wander from thee.

MAN. I say 'tis blood—my blood! the pure warm stream
Which ran in the veins of my fathers, and in ours
When we were in our youth, and had one heart,
And loved each other as we should not love,
And this was shed: but still it rises up,
Colouring the clouds, that shut me out from heaven,
Where thou art not—and I shall never be.

C. HUN. Man of strange words, and some half-maddening sin,
Which makes thee people vacancy, whate'er
Thy dread and sufferance be, there's comfort yet—
The aid of holy men, and heavenly patience——

MAN. Patience and patience! Hence—that word was made
For brutes of burthen, not for birds of prey;
Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine,—
I am not of thine order.

C. HUN. Thanks to heaven!
I would not be of thine for the free fame
Of William Tell; but whatsoe'er thine ill,
It must be borne, and these wild starts are useless.

MAN. Do I not bear it?—Look on me—I live.

C. HUN. This is convulsion, and no healthful life.

MAN. I tell thee, man! I have lived many years,
Many long years, but they are nothing now
To those which I must number: ages—ages—
Space and eternity—and consciousness,
With the fierce thirst of death—and still unslaked!

C. HUN. Why, on thy brow the seal of middle age
Hath scarce been set; I am thine elder far.

MAN. Think'st thou existence doth depend on time?
It doth; but actions are our epochs: mine
Have made my days and nights imperishable,
Endless, and all alike, as sands on the shore,
Innumerable atoms; and one desert,
Barren and cold, on which the wild waves break,

But nothing rests, save carcasses and wrecks,
Rocks, and the salt-surf weeds of bitterness.

C. Hun. Alas! he's mad—but yet I must not leave him.

Man. I would I were—for then the things I see
Would be but a distemper'd dream.

C. Hun. What is it
That thou dost see, or think thou look'st upon?

Man. Myself, and thee—a peasant of the Alps—
Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,
And spirit patient, pious, proud and free;
Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent thoughts;
Thy days of health, and nights of sleep; thy toils,
By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes
Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave,
With cross and garland over its green turf,
And thy grandchildren's love for epitaph;
This do I see—and then I look within—
It matters not—my soul was scorch'd already!

C. Hun. And wouldst thou then exchange thy lot for mine?

Man. No, friend! I would not wrong thee, nor exchange
My lot with living being: I can bear—
However wretchedly, 'tis still to bear—

In life what others could not brook to dream,
But perish in their slumber.

C. HUN. And with this—
This cautious feeling for another's pain,
Canst thou be black with evil?—say not so.
Can one of gentle thoughts have wreak'd revenge
Upon his enemies?

MAN. Oh! no, no, no!
My injuries came down on those who loved me—
On those whom I best loved: I never quell'd
An enemy, save in my just defence—
But my embrace was fatal.

C. HUN. Heaven give thee rest!
And penitence restore thee to thyself;
My prayers shall be for thee.

MAN. I need them not,
But can endure thy pity. I depart—
'Tis time—farewell!—Here's gold, and thanks for thee—
No words—it is thy due.—Follow me not—
I know my path—the mountain peril's past:—
And once again, I charge thee, follow not!

[*Exit* MANFRED.

SCENE II.

A lower Valley in the Alps. A Cataract.

Enter MANFRED.

It is not noon—the sunbow's rays[1] still arch
The torrent with the many hues of heaven,
And roll the sheeted silver's waving column
O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,
And fling its lines of foaming light along,
And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,
The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death,
As told in the Apocalypse. No eyes
But mine now drink this sight of loveliness;
I should be sole in this sweet solitude,
And with the Spirit of the place divide
The homage of these waters.—I will call her.

(MANFRED *takes some of the water into the palm of his hand, and flings it in the air, muttering the adjuration. After a pause, the* WITCH OF THE ALPS *rises beneath the arch of the sunbeam of the torrent.*)

Beautiful Spirit! with thy hair of light,
And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form
The charms of Earth's least-mortal daughters grow
To an unearthly stature, in an essence
Of purer elements; while the hues of youth,—
Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek,
Rock'd by the beating of her mother's heart,
Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight leaves
Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow,
The blush of earth embracing with her heaven,—
Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame
The beauties of the sunbow which bends o'er thee.
Beautiful Spirit! in thy calm clear brow,
Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul,
Which of itself shows immortality,
I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son
Of Earth, whom the abstruser powers permit
At times to commune with them—if that he
Avail him of his spells—to call thee thus,
And gaze on thee a moment.

WITCH. Son of Earth!
I know thee, and the powers which give thee power;
I know thee for a man of many thoughts,
And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,

Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.
I have expected this—what wouldst thou with me?

MAN. To look upon thy beauty—nothing further.
The face of the earth hath madden'd me, and I
Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce
To the abodes of those who govern her—
But they can nothing aid me. I have sought
From them what they could not bestow, and now
I search no further.

WITCH. What could be the quest
Which is not in the power of the most powerful,
The rulers of the invisible?

MAN. A boon;
But why should I repeat it? 'twere in vain.

WITCH. I know not that; let thy lips utter it.

MAN. Well, though it torture me, 'tis but the same;
My pang shall find a voice. From my youth upwards
My spirit walk'd not with the souls of men,
Nor look'd upon the earth with human eyes;
The thirst of their ambition was not mine,
The aim of their existence was not mine;
My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my powers,
Made me a stranger; though I wore the form,
I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,

Nor midst the creatures of clay that girded me
Was there but one who——but of her anon.
I said, with men, and with the thoughts of men,
I held but slight communion; but instead,
My joy was in the Wilderness, to breathe
The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,
Where the birds dare not build, nor insect's wing
Flit o'er the herbless granite; or to plunge
Into the torrent, and to roll along
On the swift whirl of the new breaking wave
Of river-stream, or ocean, in their flow.
In these my early strength exulted; or
To follow through the night the moving moon,
The stars and their development; or catch
The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim;
Or to look, list'ning, on the scatter'd leaves,
While Autumn winds were at their evening song.
These were my pastimes, and to be alone;
For if the beings, of whom I was one,—
Hating to be so,—cross'd me in my path,
I felt myself degraded back to them,
And was all clay again. And then I dived,
In my lone wanderings, to the caves of death,
Searching its cause in its effect; and drew

From wither'd bones, and skulls, and heap'd up dust,
Conclusions most forbidden. Then I pass'd
The nights of years in sciences untaught,
Save in the old-time; and with time and toil,
And terrible ordeal, and such penance
As in itself hath power upon the air,
And spirits that do compass air and earth,
Space, and the peopled infinite, I made
Mine eyes familiar with Eternity,
Such as, before me, did the Magi, and
He who from out their fountain dwellings raised
Eros and Anteros, (2) at Gadara,
As I do thee;—and with my knowledge grew
The thirst of knowledge, and the power and joy
Of this most bright intelligence, until——

WITCH. Proceed.

MAN. Oh! I but thus prolong'd my words,
Boasting these idle attributes, because
As I approach the core of my heart's grief—
But to my task. I have not named to thee
Father or mother, mistress, friend, or being,
With whom I wore the chain of human ties;
If I had such, they seem'd not such to me—
Yet there was one——

WITCH. Spare not thyself—proceed.

MAN. She was like me in lineaments—her eyes,
Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone
Even of her voice, they said were like to mine;
But soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty:
She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings,
The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind
To comprehend the universe: nor these
Alone, but with them gentler powers than mine,
Pity, and smiles, and tears—which I had not;
And tenderness—but that I had for her;
Humility—and that I never had.
Her faults were mine—her virtues were her own—
I loved her, and destroy'd her!

WITCH. With thy hand?

MAN. Not with my hand, but heart—which broke her heart—
It gazed on mine, and wither'd. I have shed
Blood, but not hers—and yet her blood was shed—
I saw—and could not stanch it.

WITCH. And for this—
A being of the race thou dost despise,
The order which thine own would rise above,
Mingling with us and ours, thou dost forego

The gifts of our great knowledge, and shrink'st back
To recreant mortality——Away!

MAN. Daughter of Air! I tell thee, since that hour—
But words are breath—look on me in my sleep,
Or watch my watchings—Come and sit by me!
My solitude is solitude no more,
But peopled with the Furies;—I have gnash'd
My teeth in darkness till returning morn,
Then cursed myself till sunset;—I have pray'd
For madness as a blessing—'tis denied me.
I have affronted death—but in the war
Of elements the waters shrunk from me,
And fatal things pass'd harmless—the cold hand
Of an all-pitiless demon held me back,
Back by a single hair, which would not break.
In fantasy, imagination, all
The affluence of my soul—which one day was
A Crœsus in creation—I plunged deep,
But, like an ebbing wave, it dash'd me back
Into the gulf of my unfathom'd thought.
I plunged amidst mankind—Forgetfulness
I sought in all, save where 'tis to be found,
And that I have to learn—my sciences,
My long pursued and super-human art,

Is mortal here—I dwell in my despair—
And live—and live for ever.

WITCH. It may be
That I can aid thee.

MAN. To do this thy power
Must wake the dead, or lay me low with them.
Do so—in any shape—in any hour—
With any torture—so it be the last.

WITCH. That is not in my province; but if thou
Wilt swear obedience to my will, and do
My bidding, it may help thee to thy wishes.

MAN. I will not swear—Obey! and whom? the spirits
Whose presence I command, and be the slave
Of those who served me—Never!

WITCH. Is this all?
Hast thou no gentler answer?—Yet bethink thee,
And pause ere thou rejectest.

MAN. I have said it.

WITCH. Enough!—I may retire then—say!

MAN. Retire!

[*The* WITCH *disappears.*

MAN. (*alone.*) We are the fools of time and terror: Days
Steal on us and steal from us; yet we live,
Loathing our life, and dreading still to die.
In all the days of this detested yoke—

This vital weight upon the struggling heart,
Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick with pain,
Or joy that ends in agony or faintness—
In all the days of past and future, for
In life there is no present, we can number
How few—how less than few—wherein the soul
Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws back
As from a stream in winter, though the chill
Be but a moment's. I have one resource
Still in my science—I can call the dead,
And ask them what it is we dread to be:
The sternest answer can but be the Grave,
And that is nothing—if they answer not—
The buried Prophet answer'd to the Hag
Of Endor; and the Spartan Monarch drew
From the Byzantine maid's unsleeping spirit
An answer and his destiny—he slew
That which he loved, unknowing what he slew,
And died unpardon'd—though he call'd in aid
The Phyxian Jove, and in Phigalia roused
The Arcadian Evocators to compel
The indignant shadow to depose her wrath,
Or fix her term of vengeance—she replied
In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd. (3)

If I had never lived, that which I love
Had still been living; had I never loved,
That which I love would still be beautiful—
Happy and giving happiness. What is she?
What is she now?—a sufferer for my sins—
A thing I dare not think upon—or nothing
Within few hours I shall not call in vain—
Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare:
Until this hour I never shrunk to gaze
On spirit, good or evil—now I tremble,
And feel a strange cold thaw upon my heart;
But I can act even what I most abhor,
And champion human fears.—The night approaches.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The Summit of the Jungfrau Mountain.

Enter First Destiny.

The moon is rising broad, and round, and bright;
And here on snows, where never human foot
Of common mortal trod, we nightly tread,
And leave no traces; o'er the savage sea,

The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,
We skim its rugged breakers, which put on
The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam,
Frozen in a moment—a dead whirlpool's image;
And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,
The fretwork of some earthquake—where the clouds
Pause to repose themselves in passing by—
Is sacred to our revels, or our vigils;
Here do I wait my sisters, on our way
To the Hall of Arimanes, for to-night
Is our great festival—'tis strange they come not.

A Voice without, singing.

The Captive Usurper,
  Hurl'd down from the throne,
Lay buried in torpor,
  Forgotten and lone;
I broke through his slumbers,
  I shiver'd his chain,
I leagued him with numbers—
  He's Tyrant again!

With the blood of a million he'll answer my care,
With a nation's destruction—his flight and despair.

Second Voice, without.

The ship sail'd on, the ship sail'd fast,
But I left not a sail, and I left not a mast;
There is not a plank of the hull or the deck,
And there is not a wretch to lament o'er his wreck;
Save one, whom I held, as he swam, by the hair,
And he was a subject well worthy my care;
A traitor on land, and a pirate at sea—
But I saved him to wreak further havoc for me!

FIRST DESTINY, *answering.*

The city lies sleeping;
The morn, to deplore it,
May dawn on it weeping:
Sullenly, slowly,
The black plague flew o'er it—
Thousands lie lowly;
Tens of thousands shall perish—
The living shall fly from
The sick they should cherish;
But nothing can vanquish
The touch that they die from.
Sorrow and anguish,

And evil and dread,
Envelop a nation—
The blest are the dead,
Who see not the sight
Of their own desolation.—
This work of a night—
This wreck of a realm—this deed of my doing—
For ages I've done, and shall still be renewing!

Enter the SECOND *and* THIRD DESTINIES.

The Three.

Our hands contain the hearts of men,
Our footsteps are their graves;
We only give to take again
The spirits of our slaves!

FIRST DES. Welcome!—Where's Nemesis?

SECOND DES. At some great work;
But what I know not, for my hands were full.

THIRD DES. Behold she cometh.

Enter NEMESIS.

FIRST DES. Say, where hast thou been?
My sisters and thyself are slow to-night.

NEM. I was detain'd repairing shatter'd thrones,
Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,
Avenging men upon their enemies,
And making them repent their own revenge;
Goading the wise to madness; from the dull
Shaping out oracles to rule the world
Afresh, for they were waxing out of date,
And mortals dared to ponder for themselves,
To weigh kings in the balance, and to speak
Of freedom, the forbidden fruit.—Away!
We have outstaid the hour—mount we our clouds!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Hall of Arimanes—Arimanes on his Throne, a Globe of Fire, surrounded by the Spirits.

Hymn of the SPIRITS.

Hail to our Master!—Prince of Earth and Air!—
Who walks the clouds and waters—in his hand
The sceptre of the elements, which tear
Themselves to chaos at his high command!

He breatheth—and a tempest shakes the sea;
He speaketh—and the clouds reply in thunder;
He gazeth—from his glance the sunbeams flee;
He moveth—earthquakes rend the world asunder.
Beneath his footsteps the volcanos rise;
His shadow is the Pestilence; his path
The comets herald through the crackling skies;
And planets turn to ashes at his wrath.
To him War offers daily sacrifice;
To him Death pays his tribute; Life is his,
With all its infinite of agonies—
And his the spirit of whatever is!

Enter the DESTINIES *and* NEMESIS.

FIRST DES. Glory to Arimanes! on the earth
His power increaseth—both my sisters did
His bidding, nor did I neglect my duty!
SECOND DES. Glory to Arimanes! we who bow
The necks of men, bow down before his throne!
THIRD DES. Glory to Arimanes!—we await
His nod!
NEM. Sovereign of Sovereigns! we are thine,
And all that liveth, more or less, is ours,
And most things wholly so; still to increase

Our power, increasing thine, demands our care,
And we are vigilant—Thy late commands
Have been fulfill'd to the utmost.

Enter MANFRED.

A SPIRIT. What is here?
A mortal!—Thou most rash and fatal wretch,
Bow down and worship!

SECOND SPIRIT. I do know the man—
A Magian of great power, and fearful skill!

THIRD SPIRIT. Bow down and worship, slave!—What, know'st thou not
Thine and our Sovereign?—Tremble, and obey!

ALL THE SPIRITS. Prostrate thyself, and thy condemned clay,
Child of the Earth! or dread the worst.

MAN. I know it;
And yet ye see I kneel not.

FOURTH SPIRIT. 'Twill be taught thee.

MAN. 'Tis taught already;—many a night on the earth,
On the bare ground, have I bow'd down my face,
And strew'd my head with ashes; I have known
The fulness of humiliation, for

I sunk before my vain despair, and knelt
To my own desolation.

FIFTH SPIRIT. Dost thou dare
Refuse to Arimanes on his throne
What the whole earth accords, beholding not
The terror of his Glory—Crouch! I say.

MAN. Bid *him* bow down to that which is above him,
The overruling Infinite—the Maker
Who made him not for worship—let him kneel,
And we will kneel together.

THE SPIRITS. Crush the worm!
Tear him in pieces!—

FIRST DES. Hence! Avaunt!—he's mine.
Prince of the Powers invisible! This man
Is of no common order, as his port
And presence here denote; his sufferings
Have been of an immortal nature, like
Our own; his knowledge and his powers and will,
As far as is compatible with clay,
Which clogs the etherial essence, have been such
As clay hath seldom borne; his aspirations
Have been beyond the dwellers of the earth,
And they have only taught him what we know—
That knowledge is not happiness, and science

But an exchange of ignorance for that
Which is another kind of ignorance.
This is not all—the passions, attributes
Of earth and heaven, from which no power, nor being,
Nor breath from the worm upwards is exempt,
Have pierced his heart; and in their consequence
Made him a thing, which I, who pity not,
Yet pardon those who pity. He is mine,
And thine, it may be—be it so, or not,
No other Spirit in this region hath
A soul like his—or power upon his soul.

NEM. What doth he here then?

FIRST DES. Let him answer that.

MAN. Ye know what I have known; and without power
I could not be amongst ye: but there are
Powers deeper still beyond—I come in quest
Of such, to answer unto what I seek.

NEM. What wouldst thou?

MAN. Thou canst not reply to me.
Call up the dead—my question is for them.

NEM. Great Arimanes, doth thy will avouch
The wishes of this mortal?

ARI. Yea.

NEM. Whom wouldst thou Uncharnel?

MAN. One without a tomb—call up Astarte.

NEMESIS.

Shadow! or Spirit!
Whatever thou art,
Which still doth inherit
The whole or a part
Of the form of thy birth,
Of the mould of thy clay,
Which return'd to the earth,
Re-appear to the day!
Bear what thou borest,
The heart and the form,
And the aspect thou worest
Redeem from the worm.
Appear!—Appear!—Appear!
Who sent thee there requires thee here!

(*The Phantom of* ASTARTE *rises and stands in the midst.*)

MAN. Can this be death? there's bloom upon her cheek; But now I see it is no living hue,

But a strange hectic—like the unnatural red
Which Autumn plants upon the perish'd leaf.
It is the same! Oh, God! that I should dread
To look upon the same—Astarte!—No,
I cannot speak to her—but bid her speak—
Forgive me or condemn me.

NEMESIS.

By the power which hath broken
The grave which enthrall'd thee,
Speak to him who hath spoken,
Or those who have call'd thee!

MAN. She is silent,
And in that silence I am more than answer'd.

NEM. My power extends no further. Prince of air!
It rests with thee alone—command her voice.

ARI. Spirit—obey this sceptre!

NEM. Silent still!
She is not of our order, but belongs
To the other powers. Mortal! thy quest is vain,
And we are baffled also.

MAN. Hear me, hear me—
Astarte! my beloved! speak to me:

I have so much endured—so much endure—
Look on me! the grave hath not changed thee more
Than I am changed for thee. Thou lovedst me
Too much, as I loved thee: we were not made
To torture thus each other, though it were
The deadliest sin to love as we have loved.
Say that thou loath'st me not—that I do bear
This punishment for both—that thou wilt be
One of the blessed—and that I shall die;
For hitherto all hateful things conspire
To bind me in existence—in a life
Which makes me shrink from immortality—
A future like the past. I cannot rest.
I know not what I ask, nor what I seek:
I feel but what thou art—and what I am;
And I would hear yet once before I perish
The voice which was my music—Speak to me!
For I have call'd on thee in the still night,
Startled the slumbering birds from the hush'd boughs,
And woke the mountain wolves, and made the caves
Acquainted with thy vainly echoed name,
Which answer'd me—many things answer'd me—
Spirits and men—but thou wert silent all.
Yet speak to me! I have outwatch'd the stars,

And gazed o'er heaven in vain in search of thee.
Speak to me! I have wander'd o'er the earth
And never found thy likeness—Speak to me!
Look on the fiends around—they feel for me:
I fear them not, and feel for thee alone—
Speak to me! though it be in wrath;—but say—
I reck not what—but let me hear thee once—
This once—once more!

PHANTOM OF ASTARTE. Manfred!

MAN. Say on, say on—
I live but in the sound—it is thy voice!

PHAN. Manfred! To-morrow ends thine earthly ills.
Farewell!

MAN. Yet one word more—am I forgiven?

PHAN. Farewell!

MAN. Say, shall we meet again?

PHAN. Farewell!

MAN. One word for mercy! Say, thou lovest me.

PHAN. Manfred!

[*The Spirit of* ASTARTE *disappears.*

NEM. She's gone, and will not be recall'd;
Her words will be fulfill'd. Return to the earth.

A SPIRIT. He is convulsed—This is to be a mortal
And seek the things beyond mortality.

ANOTHER SPIRIT. Yet, see, he mastereth himself, and makes
His torture tributary to his will.
Had he been one of us, he would have made
An awful spirit.

NEM. Hast thou further question
Of our great sovereign, or his worshippers?

MAN. None.

NEM. Then for a time farewell.

MAN. We meet then! Where? On the earth?—
Even as thou wilt: and for the grace accorded
I now depart a debtor. Fare ye well!

[*Exit* MANFRED.

(Scene closes.)

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.

MANFRED *and* HERMAN.

MAN. What is the hour?

HER. It wants but one till sunset,
And promises a lovely twilight.

MAN. Say,
Are all things so disposed of in the tower
As I directed?

HER. All, my lord, are ready;
Here is the key and casket.

MAN. It is well:
Thou may'st retire. [*Exit* HERMAN.

MAN. (*alone.*) There is a calm upon me—
Inexplicable stillness! which till now
Did not belong to what I knew of life.
If that I did not know philosophy
To be of all our vanities the motliest,

The merest word that ever fool'd the ear
From out the schoolman's jargon, I should deem
The golden secret, the sought "Kalon," found,
And seated in my soul. It will not last,
But it is well to have known it, though but once:
It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new sense,
And I within my tablets would note down
That there is such a feeling. Who is there?

Re-enter HERMAN.

HER. My lord, the abbot of St. Maurice craves
To greet your presence.

Enter the ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.

ABBOT. Peace be with Count Manfred!

MAN. Thanks, holy father! welcome to these walls;
Thy presence honours them, and blesseth those
Who dwell within them.

ABBOT. Would it were so, Count!—
But I would fain confer with thee alone.

MAN. Herman, retire. What would my reverend guest?

ABBOT. Thus, without prelude:—Age and zeal, my office,
And good intent, must plead my privilege;

Our near, though not acquainted neighbourhood,
May also be my herald. Rumours strange,
And of unholy nature, are abroad,
And busy with thy name; a noble name
For centuries; may he who bears it now
Transmit it unimpair'd!

MAN. Proceed,—I listen.

ABBOT. 'Tis said thou holdest converse with the things
Which are forbidden to the search of man;
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,
The many evil and unheavenly spirits
Which walk the valley of the shade of death,
Thou communest. I know that with mankind,
Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude
Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy.

MAN. And what are they who do avouch these things?

ABBOT. My pious brethren—the scared peasantry—
Even thy own vassals—who do look on thee
With most unquiet eyes. Thy life's in peril.

MAN. Take it.

ABBOT. I come to save, and not destroy—
I would not pry into thy secret soul;
But if these things be sooth, there still is time

For penitence and pity: reconcile thee
With the true church, and through the church to heaven.

MAN. I hear thee. This is my reply; whate'er
I may have been, or am, doth rest between
Heaven and myself—I shall not choose a mortal
To be my mediator. Have I sinn'd
Against your ordinances? prove and punish!

ABBOT. My son! I did not speak of punishment,
But penitence and pardon;—with thyself
The choice of such remains—and for the last,
Our institutions and our strong belief
Have given me power to smooth the path from sin
To higher hope and better thoughts; the first
I leave to heaven—"Vengeance is mine alone!"
So saith the Lord, and with all humbleness
His servant echoes back the awful word.

MAN. Old man! there is no power in holy men,
Nor charm in prayer—nor purifying form
Of penitence—nor outward look—nor fast—
Nor agony—nor, greater than all these,
The innate tortures of that deep despair,
Which is remorse without the fear of hell,
But all in all sufficient to itself
Would make a hell of heaven—can exorcise

From out the unbounded spirit, the quick sense
Of its own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and revenge
Upon itself; there is no future pang
Can deal that justice on the self-condemn'd
He deals on his own soul.

ABBOT. All this is well;
For this will pass away, and be succeeded
By an auspicious hope, which shall look up
With calm assurance to that blessed place,
Which all who seek may win, whatever be
Their earthly errors, so they be atoned:
And the commencement of atonement is
The sense of its necessity.—Say on—
And all our church can teach thee shall be taught;
And all we can absolve thee shall be pardon'd.

MAN. When Rome's sixth Emperor was near his last,
The victim of a self-inflicted wound,
To shun the torments of a public death
From senates once his slaves, a certain soldier,
With show of loyal pity, would have stanch'd
The gushing throat with his officious robe;
The dying Roman thrust him back and said—
Some empire still in his expiring glance,
"It is too late—is this fidelity?"

ABBOT. And what of this?

MAN. I answer with the Roman—
"It is too late!"

ABBOT. It never can be so,
To reconcile thyself with thy own soul,
And thy own soul with heaven. Hast thou no hope?
'Tis strange—even those who do despair above,
Yet shape themselves some phantasy on earth,
To which frail twig they cling, like drowning men.

MAN. Ay—father! I have had those earthly visions
And noble aspirations in my youth,
To make my own the mind of other men,
The enlightener of nations; and to rise
I knew not whither—it might be to fall;
But fall, even as the mountain-cataract,
Which having leapt from its more dazzling height,
Even in the foaming strength of its abyss,
(Which casts up misty columns that become
Clouds raining from the re-ascended skies,)
Lies low but mighty still.—But this is past,
My thoughts mistook themselves.

ABBOT. And wherefore so?

MAN. I could not tame my nature down; for he
Must serve who fain would sway—and soothe—and suc—

And watch all time—and pry into all place—
And be a living lie—who would become
A mighty thing amongst the mean, and such
The mass are; I disdain'd to mingle with
A herd, though to be leader—and of wolves.
The lion is alone, and so am I.

ABBOT. And why not live and act with other men?

MAN. Because my nature was averse from life;
And yet not cruel; for I would not make,
But find a desolation:—like the wind,
The red-hot breath of the most lone Simoom,
Which dwells but in the desert, and sweeps o'er
The barren sands which bear no shrubs to blast,
And revels o'er their wild and arid waves,
And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,
But being met is deadly; such hath been
The course of my existence; but there came
Things in my path which are no more.

ABBOT. Alas!
I 'gin to fear that thou art past all aid
From me and from my calling; yet so young,
I still would——

MAN. Look on me! there is an order
Of mortals on the earth, who do become

Old in their youth, and die ere middle age,
Without the violence of warlike death;
Some perishing of pleasure—some of study—
Some worn with toil—some of mere weariness—
Some of disease—and some insanity—
And some of wither'd, or of broken hearts;
For this last is a malady which slays
More than are number'd in the lists of Fate,
Taking all shapes, and bearing many names.
Look upon me! for even of all these things
Have I partaken; and of all these things,
One were enough; then wonder not that I
Am what I am, but that I ever was,
Or having been, that I am still on earth.

ABBOT. Yet, hear me still——

MAN. Old man! I do respect
Thine order, and revere thine years; I deem
Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain:
Think me not churlish; I would spare thyself,
Far more than me, in shunning at this time
All further colloquy—and so—farewell.

[*Exit* MANFRED.

ABBOT. This should have been a noble creature: he
Hath all the energy which would have made

A goodly frame of glorious elements,
Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,
It is an awful chaos—light and darkness—
And mind and dust—and passions and pure thoughts,
Mix'd, and contending without end or order,
All dormant or destructive: he will perish,
And yet he must not; I will try once more,
For such are worth redemption; and my duty
Is to dare all things for a righteous end.
I'll follow him—but cautiously, though surely.

[*Exit* ABBOT.

SCENE II.

Another Chamber.

MANFRED *and* HERMAN.

HER. My lord, you bade me wait on you at sunset:
He sinks behind the mountain.

MAN. Doth he so?
I will look on him.

[MANFRED *advances to the Window of the Hall.*

Glorious Orb! the idol

Of early nature, and the vigorous race
Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons [4]
Of the embrace of angels, with a sex
More beautiful than they, which did draw down
The erring spirits who can ne'er return.—
Most glorious orb! that wert a worship, ere
The mystery of thy making was reveal'd!
Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,
Which gladden'd, on their mountain tops, the hearts
Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they pour'd
Themselves in orisons! Thou material God!
And representative of the Unknown—
Who chose thee for his shadow! Thou chief star!
Centre of many stars! which mak'st our earth
Endurable, and temperest the hues
And hearts of all who walk within thy rays!
Sire of the seasons! Monarch of the climes,
And those who dwell in them! for near or far,
Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee,
Even as our outward aspects;—thou dost rise,
And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee well!
I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first glance
Of love and wonder was for thee, then take
My latest look: thou wilt not beam on one

To whom the gifts of life and warmth have been
Of a more fatal nature. He is gone:
I follow. [*Exit* MANFRED.

SCENE III.

The Mountains—The Castle of Manfred at some distance —A Terrace before a Tower.—Time, Twilight.

HERMAN, MANUEL, *and other Dependants of* MANFRED.

HER. 'Tis strange enough; night after night, for years,
He hath pursued long vigils in this tower,
Without a witness. I have been within it,—
So have we all been oft-times; but from it,
Or its contents, it were impossible
To draw conclusions absolute, of aught
His studies tend to. To be sure, there is
One chamber where none enter; I would give
The fee of what I have to come these three years,
To pore upon its mysteries.

MANUEL. 'Twere dangerous;
Content thyself with what thou knowest already.

HER. Ah! Manuel! thou art elderly and wise,

And couldst say much; thou hast dwelt within the castle—
How many years is't?

MANUEL. Ere Count Manfred's birth,
I served his father, whom he nought resembles.

HER. There be more sons in like predicament.
But wherein do they differ?

MANUEL. I speak not
Of features or of form, but mind and habits:
Count Sigismund was proud,—but gay and free,—
A warrior and a reveller; he dwelt not
With books and solitude, nor made the night
A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,
Merrier than day; he did not walk the rocks
And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside
From men and their delights.

HER. Beshrew the hour,
But those were jocund times! I would that such
Would visit the old walls again; they look
As if they had forgotten them.

MANUEL. These walls
Must change their chieftain first. Oh! I have seen
Some strange things in them, Herman.

HER. Come, be friendly;
Relate me some to while away our watch:

I've heard thee darkly speak of an event
Which happen'd hereabouts, by this same tower.

MANUEL. That was a night indeed; I do remember
'Twas twilight, as it may be now, and such
Another evening;—yon red cloud, which rests
On Eigher's pinnacle, so rested then,—
So like that it might be the same; the wind
Was faint and gusty, and the mountain snows
Began to glitter with the climbing moon;
Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower,—
How occupied, we knew not, but with him
The sole companion of his wanderings
And watchings—her, whom of all earthly things
That lived, the only thing he seem'd to love,—
As he, indeed, by blood was bound to do,
The lady Astarte, his——
Hush! who comes here?

Enter the ABBOT.

ABBOT. Where is your master?

HER. Yonder, in the tower.

ABBOT. I must speak with him.

MANUEL. 'Tis impossible;

He is most private, and must not be thus
Intruded on.

ABBOT. Upon myself I take
The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be—
But I must see him.

HER. Thou hast seen him once
This eve already.

ABBOT. Herman! I command thee,
Knock, and apprize the Count of my approach.

HER. We dare not.

ABBOT. Then it seems I must be herald
Of my own purpose.

MANUEL. Reverend father, stop—
I pray you pause.

ABBOT. Why so?

MANUEL. But step this way,
And I will tell you further.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Interior of the Tower.

MANFRED *alone.*

MAN. The stars are forth, the moon above the tops
Of the snow-shining mountains.—Beautiful!
I linger yet with Nature, for the night
Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of man; and in her starry shade
Of dim and solitary loveliness,
I learn'd the language of another world.
I do remember me, that in my youth,
When I was wandering,—upon such a night
I stood within the Coliseum's wall,
Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;
The trees which grew along the broken arches
Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars
Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar
The watchdog bay'd beyond the Tiber; and
More near from out the Cæsars' palace came
The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,

Of distant sentinels the fitful song
Begun and died upon the gentle wind.
Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach
Appear'd to skirt the horizon, yet they stood
Within a bowshot—where the Cæsars dwelt,
And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst
A grove which springs through levell'd battlements,
And twines its roots with the imperial hearths,
Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth;—
But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,
A noble wreck in ruinous perfection!
While Cæsar's chambers, and the Augustan halls,
Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.—
And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
Which soften'd down the hoar austerity
Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,
As 'twere, anew, the gaps of centuries;
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not, till the place
Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
With silent worship of the great of old!—
The dead, but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule
Our spirits from their urns.—

'Twas such a night!
'Tis strange that I recall it at this time;
But I have found our thoughts take wildest flight
Even at the moment when they should array
Themselves in pensive order.

Enter the ABBOT.

ABBOT. My good lord!
I crave a second grace for this approach;
But yet let not my humble zeal offend
By its abruptness—all it hath of ill
Recoils on me; its good in the effect
May light upon your head—could I say *heart*—
Could I touch *that*, with words or prayers, I should
Recall a noble spirit which hath wander'd;
But is not yet all lost.

MAN. Thou know'st me not;
My days are number'd, and my deeds recorded:
Retire, or 'twill be dangerous—Away!

ABBOT. Thou dost not mean to menace me?

MAN. Not I;
I simply tell thee peril is at hand,
And would preserve thee.

ABBOT. What dost mean?

MAN. Look there!
What dost thou see?
ABBOT. Nothing.
MAN. Look there, I say,
And steadfastly;—now tell me what thou seest.
ABBOT. That which should shake me—but I fear it not—
I see a dusk and awful figure rise
Like an infernal god from out the earth;
His face wrapt in a mantle, and his form
Robed as with angry clouds; he stands between
Thyself and me—but I do fear him not.
MAN. Thou hast no cause—he shall not harm thee—but
His sight may shock thine old limbs into palsy.
I say to thee—Retire!
ABBOT. And I reply—
Never—till I have battled with this fiend—
What doth he here?
MAN. Why—ay—what doth he here?—
I did not send for him,—he is unbidden.
ABBOT. Alas! lost mortal! what with guests like these
Hast thou to do? I tremble for thy sake;
Why doth he gaze on thee, and thou on him?
Ah! he unveils his aspect; on his brow
The thunder-scars are graven; from his eye

Glares forth the immortality of hell—
Avaunt!——

MAN. Pronounce—what is thy mission?

SPIRIT. Come!

ABBOT. What art thou, unknown being? answer!—speak!

SPIRIT. The genius of this mortal.—Come! 'tis time.

MAN. I am prepared for all things, but deny
The power which summons me. Who sent thee here?

SPIRIT. Thou'lt know anon—Come! come!

MAN. I have commanded
Things of an essence greater far than thine,
And striven with thy masters. Get thee hence!

SPIRIT. Mortal! thine hour is come—Away! I say.

MAN. I knew, and know my hour is come, but not
To render up my soul to such as thee:
Away! I'll die as I have lived—alone.

SPIRIT. Then I must summon up my brethren.—Rise!

[*Other Spirits rise up.*

ABBOT. Avaunt! ye evil ones!—Avaunt! I say,—
Ye have no power where piety hath power,
And I do charge ye in the name——

SPIRIT. Old man!
We know ourselves, our mission, and thine order;

Waste not thy holy words on idle uses,
It were in vain; this man is forfeited.
Once more I summon him—Away! away!

MAN. I do defy ye,—though I feel my soul
Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye;
Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath
To breathe my scorn upon ye—earthly strength
To wrestle, though with spirits; what ye take
Shall be ta'en limb by limb.

SPIRIT. Reluctant mortal!
Is this the Magian who would so pervade
The world invisible, and make himself
Almost our equal?—Can it be that thou
Art thus in love with life? the very life
Which made thee wretched!

MAN. Thou false fiend, thou liest!
My life is in its last hour,—*that* I know,
Nor would redeem a moment of that hour;
I do not combat against death, but thee
And thy surrounding angels; my past power
Was purchased by no compact with thy crew,
But by superior science—penance—daring—
And length of watching—strength of mind—and skill
In knowledge of our fathers—when the earth

Saw men and spirits walking side by side,
And gave ye no supremacy: I stand
Upon my strength—I do defy—deny—
Spurn back, and scorn ye!—

SPIRIT. But thy many crimes
Have made thee——

MAN. What are they to such as thee?
Must crimes be punish'd but by other crimes,
And greater criminals?—Back to thy hell!
Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel;
Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know:
What I have done is done; I bear within
A torture which could nothing gain from thine:
The mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thoughts—
Is its own origin of ill and end—
And its own place and time—its innate sense,
When stripp'd of this mortality, derives
No colour from the fleeting things without;
But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert.
Thou didst not tempt me, and thou couldst not tempt me;
I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey—
But was my own destroyer, and will be

My own hereafter.—Back, ye baffled fiends!
The hand of death is on me—but not yours!

[*The Demons disappear.*

ABBOT. Alas! how pale thou art—thy lips are white—
And thy breast heaves—and in thy gasping throat
The accents rattle—Give thy prayers to heaven—
Pray—albeit but in thought,—but die not thus.

MAN. 'Tis over—my dull eyes can fix thee not;
But all things swim around me, and the earth
Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare thee well—
Give me thy hand.

ABBOT. Cold—cold—even to the heart—
But yet one prayer—alas! how fares it with thee?—

MAN. Old man! 'tis not so difficult to die.

[MANFRED *expires.*

ABBOT. He's gone—his soul hath ta'en its earthless flight—
Whither? I dread to think—but he is gone.

NOTES TO MANFRED.

Note 1, page 72, lines 1 and 2.

——— the sunbow's rays still arch
The torrent with the many hues of heaven.

This iris is formed by the rays of the sun over the lower part of the alpine torrents: it is exactly like a rainbow, come down to pay a visit, and so close that you may walk into it:—this effect lasts till noon.

Note 2, page 76, lines 11 and 12.

He who from out their fountain dwellings raised
Eros and Anteros, at Gadara.

The philosopher Iamblicus. The story of the raising of Eros and Anteros may be found in his life, by Eunapius. It is well told.

Note 3, page 80, lines 23 and 24.

——— she replied
In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd.

The story of Pausanias, king of Sparta, (who commanded the Greeks at the battle of Platea, and afterwards perished for an attempt to betray the Lacedemonians) and Cleonice, is told in Plutarch's life of Cimon; and in the Laconics of Pausanias the Sophist, in his description of Greece.

Note 4, page 104, lines 2 and 3.

——— *the giant sons*
Of the embrace of angels.

"That the *Sons of God* saw the daughters of men, that they were fair," &c.

"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the *Sons of God* came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."

Genesis, ch. vi. verses 2 and 4.

HEBREW MELODIES.

The subsequent poems were written at the request of my friend, the Hon. D. Kinnaird, for a Selection of Hebrew Melodies, and have been published, with the music, arranged, by Mr. BRAHAM and Mr. NATHAN.

HEBREW MELODIES.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY.

1.

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

2.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling place.

3.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

THE HARP THE MONARCH MINSTREL SWEPT.

1.

THE harp the monarch minstrel swept,
The King of men, the loved of Heaven,
Which Music hallow'd while she wept
O'er tones her heart of hearts had given,
Redoubled be her tears, its chords are riven!
It soften'd men of iron mould,
It gave them virtues not their own;
No ear so dull, no soul so cold,
That felt not, fired not to the tone,
Till David's lyre grew mightier than his throne!

2.

It told the triumphs of our King,
It wafted glory to our God;
It made our gladden'd valleys ring,
The cedars bow, the mountains nod;
Its sound aspired to Heaven and there abode!

Since then, though heard on earth no more,
Devotion and her daughter Love
Still bid the bursting spirit soar
To sounds that seem as from above,
In dreams that day's broad light can not remove.

IF THAT HIGH WORLD.

1.

If that high world, which lies beyond
Our own, surviving Love endears;
If there the cherish'd heart be fond,
The eye the same, except in tears—
How welcome those untrodden spheres!
How sweet this very hour to die!
To soar from earth and find all fears
Lost in thy light—Eternity!

2.

It must be so: 'tis not for self
That we so tremble on the brink;
And striving to o'erleap the gulf,
Yet cling to Being's severing link.
Oh! in that future let us think
To hold each heart the heart that shares,
With them the immortal waters drink,
And soul in soul grow deathless theirs!

THE WILD GAZELLE.

1.

THE wild gazelle on Judah's hills
  Exulting yet may bound,
And drink from all the living rills
  That gush on holy ground;
Its airy step and glorious eye
May glance in tameless transport by:—

2.

A step as fleet, an eye more bright,
  Hath Judah witness'd there;
And o'er her scenes of lost delight
  Inhabitants more fair.
The cedars wave on Lebanon,
But Judah's statelier maids are gone!

3.

More blest each palm that shades those plains
  Than Israel's scatter'd race;

For, taking root, it there remains
In solitary grace:
It cannot quit its place of birth,
It will not live in other earth.

4.

But we must wander witheringly,
In other lands to die;
And where our fathers' ashes be,
Our own may never lie:
Our temple hath not left a stone,
And Mockery sits on Salem's throne.

OH! WEEP FOR THOSE.

1.

Oh! weep for those that wept by Babel's stream,
Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream;
Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell;
Mourn—where their God hath dwelt the Godless dwell!

2.

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet?
And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet?
And Judah's melody once more rejoice
The hearts that leap'd before its heavenly voice?

3.

Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
How shall ye flee away and be at rest!
The wild-dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,
Mankind their country—Israel but the grave!

ON JORDAN'S BANKS.

1.

On Jordan's banks the Arabs' camels stray,
On Sion's hill the False One's votaries pray,
The Baal-adorer bows on Sinai's steep—
Yet there—even there—Oh God! thy thunders sleep:

2.

There—where thy finger scorch'd the tablet stone!
There—where thy shadow to thy people shone!
Thy glory shrouded in its garb of fire:
Thyself—none living see and not expire!

3.

Oh! in the lightning let thy glance appear!
Sweep from his shiver'd hand the oppressor's spear:
How long by tyrants shall thy land be trod!
How long thy temple worshipless, Oh God!

JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.

1.

SINCE our Country, our God—Oh, my Sire!
Demand that thy Daughter expire;
Since thy triumph was bought by thy vow—
Strike the bosom that's bared for thee now!

2.

And the voice of my mourning is o'er,
And the mountains behold me no more:
If the hand that I love lay me low,
There cannot be pain in the blow!

3.

And of this, oh, my Father! be sure—
That the blood of thy child is as pure
As the blessing I beg ere it flow,
And the last thought that soothes me below.

4.

Though the virgins of Salem lament,
Be the judge and the hero unbent!
I have won the great battle for thee,
And my Father and Country are free!

5.

When this blood of thy giving hath gush'd,
When the voice that thou lovest is hush'd,
Let my memory still be thy pride,
And forget not I smiled as I died!

OH! SNATCH'D AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM.

1.

Oh! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom:

2.

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread;
Fond wretch! as if her step disturb'd the dead!

3.

Away; we know that tears are vain,
That death nor heeds nor hears distress:
Will this unteach us to complain?
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou—who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

MY SOUL IS DARK.

1.

My soul is dark—Oh! quickly string
The harp I yet can brook to hear;
And let thy gentle fingers fling
Its melting murmurs o'er mine ear.
If in this heart a hope be dear,
That sound shall charm it forth again;
If in these eyes there lurk a tear,
'Twill flow, and cease to burn my brain:

2.

But bid the strain be wild and deep,
Nor let thy notes of joy be first:
I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,
Or else this heavy heart will burst;
For it hath been by sorrow nurst,
And ached in sleepless silence long;
And now 'tis doom'd to know the worst,
And break at once—or yield to song.

I SAW THEE WEEP.

1.

I saw thee weep—the big bright tear
Came o'er that eye of blue;
And then methought it did appear
A violet dropping dew:
I saw thee smile—the sapphire's blaze
Beside thee ceased to shine;
It could not match the living rays
That fill'd that glance of thine.

2.

As clouds from yonder sun receive
A deep and mellow die,
Which scarce the shade of coming eve
Can banish from the sky,
Those smiles unto the moodiest mind
Their own pure joy impart;
Their sunshine leaves a glow behind
That lightens o'er the heart.

THY DAYS ARE DONE.

1.

THY days are done, thy fame begun;
Thy country's strains record
The triumphs of her chosen Son,
The slaughters of his sword!
The deeds he did, the fields he won,
The freedom he restored!

2.

Though thou art fall'n, while we are free
Thou shalt not taste of death!
The generous blood that flow'd from thee
Disdain'd to sink beneath:
Within our veins its currents be,
Thy spirit on our breath!

3.

Thy name, our charging hosts along,
Shall be the battle-word!
Thy fall, the theme of choral song
From virgin voices pour'd!
To weep would do thy glory wrong;
Thou shalt not be deplored.

SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE.

1.

Warriors and Chiefs! should the shaft or the sword
Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,
Heed not the corse, though a king's, in your path:
Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath!

2.

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,
Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,
Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet!
Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

3.

Farewell to others, but never we part,
Heir to my royalty, son of my heart!
Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,
Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day!

SAUL.

1.

THOU whose spell can raise the dead,
Bid the prophet's form appear.
"Samuel, raise thy buried head!
"King, behold the phantom seer!"
Earth yawn'd; he stood the centre of a cloud:
Light changed its hue, retiring from his shroud.
Death stood all glassy in his fixed eye;
His hand was wither'd, and his veins were dry;
His foot, in bony whiteness, glitter'd there,
Shrunken and sinewless, and ghastly bare:
From lips that moved not and unbreathing frame,
Like cavern'd winds, the hollow accents came.
Saul saw, and fell to earth, as falls the oak,
At once, and blasted by the thunder-stroke.

2.

"Why is my sleep disquieted?
"Who is he that calls the dead?
"Is it thou, Oh King? Behold
"Bloodless are these limbs, and cold:

" Such are mine; and such shall be
" Thine to-morrow, when with me:
" Ere the coming day is done,
" Such shalt thou be, such thy son.
" Fare thee well, but for a day;
" Then we mix our mouldering clay.
" Thou, thy race, lie pale and low,
" Pierced by shafts of many a bow;
" And the falchion by thy side
" To thy heart, thy hand shall guide:
" Crownless, breathless, headless fall,
" Son and sire, the house of Saul!"

"ALL IS VANITY, SAITH THE PREACHER."

1.

FAME, wisdom, love, and power were mine,
And health and youth possess'd me;
My goblets blush'd from every vine,
And lovely forms caress'd me;

I sunn'd my heart in beauty's eyes,
And felt my soul grow tender;
All earth can give, or mortal prize,
Was mine of regal splendour.

2.

I strive to number o'er what days
Remembrance can discover,
Which all that life or earth displays
Would lure me to live over.

There rose no day, there roll'd no hour
Of pleasure unembitter'd;
And not a trapping deck'd my power
That gall'd not while it glitter'd.

3.

The serpent of the field, by art
And spells, is won from harming;
But that which coils around the heart,
Oh! who hath power of charming?

It will not list to wisdom's lore,
Nor music's voice can lure it;
But there it stings for evermore
The soul that must endure it.

WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS SUFFERING CLAY.

1.

When coldness wraps this suffering clay,
Ah, whither strays the immortal mind?
It cannot die, it cannot stay,
But leaves its darken'd dust behind.
Then, unembodied, doth it trace
By steps each planet's heavenly way?
Or fill at once the realms of space,
A thing of eyes, that all survey?

2.

Eternal, boundless, undecay'd,
A thought unseen, but seeing all,
All, all in earth, or skies display'd,
Shall it survey, shall it recall:
Each fainter trace that memory holds
So darkly of departed years,
In one broad glance the soul beholds,
And all, that was, at once appears.

3.

Before Creation peopled earth,
Its eye shall roll through chaos back;
And where the furthest heaven had birth,
The spirit trace its rising track.
And where the future mars or makes,
Its glance dilate o'er all to be,
While sun is quench'd or system breaks,
Fix'd in its own eternity.

4.

Above or Love, Hope, Hate, or Fear,
It lives all passionless and pure:
An age shall fleet like earthly year;
Its years as moments shall endure.
Away, away, without a wing,
O'er all, through all, its thought shall fly;
A nameless and eternal thing,
Forgetting what it was to die.

VISION OF BELSHAZZAR.

1.

THE King was on his throne,
The Satraps throng'd the hall;
A thousand bright lamps shone
O'er that high festival.
A thousand cups of gold,
In Judah deem'd divine—
Jehovah's vessels hold
The godless Heathen's wine!

2.

In that same hour and hall,
The fingers of a hand
Came forth against the wall,
And wrote as if on sand:
The fingers of a man;—
A solitary hand
Along the letters ran,
And traced them like a wand.

3.

The monarch saw, and shook,
And bade no more rejoice;
All bloodless wax'd his look,
And tremulous his voice.
" Let the men of lore appear,
" The wisest of the earth,
" And expound the words of fear,
" Which mar our royal mirth."

4.

Chaldea's seers are good,
But here they have no skill;
And the unknown letters stood
Untold and awful still.
And Babel's men of age
Are wise and deep in lore;
But now they were not sage,
They saw—but knew no more.

5.

A captive in the land,
A stranger and a youth,

He heard the king's command,
  He saw that writing's truth.
The lamps around were bright,
  The prophecy in view;
He read it on that night,—
  The morrow proved it true.

6.

" Belshazzar's grave is made,
  " His kingdom pass'd away,
" He, in the balance weigh'd,
  " Is light and worthless clay.
" The shroud, his robe of state,
  " His canopy the stone;
" The Mede is at his gate!
  " The Persian on his throne!"

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS!

Sun of the sleepless! melancholy star!
Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,
That show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel,
How like art thou to joy remember'd well!
So gleams the past, the light of other days,
Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays;
A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold,
Distinct, but distant—clear—but, oh how cold!

WERE MY BOSOM AS FALSE AS THOU DEEM'ST IT TO BE.

1.

Were my bosom as false as thou deem'st it to be,
I need not have wander'd from far Galilee;
It was but abjuring my creed to efface
The curse which, thou say'st, is the crime of my race.

2.

If the bad never triumph, then God is with thee!
If the slave only sin, thou art spotless and free!
If the Exile on earth is an Outcast on high,
Live on in thy faith, but in mine I will die.

3.

I have lost for that faith more than thou canst bestow,
As the God who permits thee to prosper doth know;
In his hand is my heart and my hope—and in thine
The land and the life which for him I resign.

HEROD'S LAMENT FOR MARIAMNE.

1.

Oh, Mariamne! now for thee
The heart for which thou bled'st is bleeding;
Revenge is lost in agony,
And wild remorse to rage succeeding.
Oh, Mariamne! where art thou?
Thou canst not hear my bitter pleading:
Ah, couldst thou—thou wouldst pardon now,
Though heaven were to my prayer unheeding.

2.

And is she dead?—and did they dare
Obey my phrensy's jealous raving?
My wrath but doom'd my own despair:
The sword that smote her's o'er me waving.—
But thou art cold, my murder'd love!
And this dark heart is vainly craving
For her who soars alone above,
And leaves my soul unworthy saving.

3.

She's gone, who shared my diadem;
  She sunk, with her my joys entombing;
I swept that flower from Judah's stem
  Whose leaves for me alone were blooming;
And mine's the guilt, and mine the hell,
  This bosom's desolation dooming;
And I have earn'd those tortures well,
  Which unconsumed are still consuming!

ON THE DAY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM BY TITUS.

1.

From the last hill that looks on thy once holy dome
I beheld thee, Oh Sion! when render'd to Rome:
'Twas thy last sun went down, and the flames of thy fall
Flash'd back on the last glance I gave to thy wall.

2.

I look'd for thy temple, I look'd for my home,
And forgot for a moment my bondage to come;
I beheld but the death-fire that fed on thy fane,
And the fast-fetter'd hands that made vengeance in vain.

3.

On many an eve, the high spot whence I gazed
Had reflected the last beam of day as it blazed;
While I stood on the height, and beheld the decline
Of the rays from the mountain that shone on thy shrine.

4.

And now on that mountain I stood on that day,
But I mark'd not the twilight beam melting away;
Oh! would that the lightning had glared in its stead,
And the thunderbolt burst on the conqueror's head!

5.

But the Gods of the Pagan shall never profane
The shrine where Jehovah disdain'd not to reign;
And scatter'd and scorn'd as thy people may be,
Our worship, oh Father! is only for thee.

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT DOWN AND WEPT.

1.

We sate down and wept by the waters
Of Babel, and thought of the day
When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,
Made Salem's high places his prey;
And ye, oh her desolate daughters!
Were scatter'd all weeping away.

2.

While sadly we gazed on the river
Which roll'd on in freedom below,
They demanded the song; but, oh never
That triumph the stranger shall know!
May this right hand be wither'd for ever,
Ere it string our high harp for the foe!

3.

On the willow that harp is suspended,
Oh Salem! its sound should be free;
And the hour when thy glories were ended
But left me that token of thee:
And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
With the voice of the spoiler by me!

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB.

1.

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

2.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.

3.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

4.

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride:
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

5.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

6.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

FROM JOB.

1.

A SPIRIT pass'd before me: I beheld
The face of Immortality unveil'd—
Deep sleep came down on every eye save mine—
And there it stood,—all formless—but divine:
Along my bones the creeping flesh did quake;
And as my damp hair stiffen'd, thus it spake:

2.

"Is man more just than God? Is man more pure
"Than he who deems even Seraphs insecure?
"Creatures of clay—vain dwellers in the dust!
"The moth survives you, and are ye more just?
"Things of a day! you wither ere the night,
"Heedless and blind to Wisdom's wasted light!"

ODE

TO

NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

" Expende Annibalem :—quot libras in duce summo
" Invenies ?————"

JUVENAL, Sat. X.

"THE Emperor Nepos was acknowledged by the "*Senate*, by the *Italians*, and by the Provincials of "*Gaul;* his moral virtues, and military talents, were "loudly celebrated; and those who derived any private "benefit from his government announced in prophetic "strains the restoration of public felicity.

* * * * * * *

* * * * * * *

"By this shameful abdication, he protracted his life "a few years, in a very ambiguous state, between an "Emperor and an Exile, till————"

Gibbon's Decline and Fall, vol. vi. p. 220.

[redacted]

ODE

TO

NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

1.

'Tis done—but yesterday a King!
And arm'd with Kings to strive—
And now thou art a nameless thing
So abject—yet alive!
Is this the man of thousand thrones,
Who strew'd our Earth with hostile bones,
And can he thus survive?
Since he, miscall'd the Morning Star,
Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

2.

Ill-minded man! why scourge thy kind
Who bow'd so low the knee?
By gazing on thyself grown blind,
Thou taught'st the rest to see.
With might unquestion'd,—power to save—
Thine only gift hath been the grave
To those that worshipp'd thee;
Nor till thy fall could mortals guess
Ambition's less than littleness!

3.

Thanks for that lesson—it will teach
To after-warriors more
Than high Philosophy can preach,
And vainly preach'd before.
That spell upon the minds of men
Breaks never to unite again,
That led them to adore
Those Pagod things of sabre-sway,
With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

4.

The triumph, and the vanity,
The rapture of the strife— [1]
The earthquake voice of Victory,
To thee the breath of life;
The sword, the sceptre, and that sway
Which man seem'd made but to obey,
Wherewith renown was rife—
All quell'd!—Dark Spirit! what must be
The madness of thy memory!

5.

The Desolator desolate!
The Victor overthrown!
The Arbiter of others' fate
A Suppliant for his own!
Is it some yet imperial hope
That with such change can calmly cope?
Or dread of death alone?
To die a prince—or live a slave—
Thy choice is most ignobly brave!

6.

He [2] who of old would rend the oak,
Dream'd not of the rebound;
Chain'd by the trunk he vainly broke—
Alone—how look'd he round?
Thou in the sternness of thy strength
An equal deed hast done at length,
And darker fate hast found:
He fell, the forest-prowlers prey;
But thou must eat thy heart away!

7.

The Roman, [3] when his burning heart
Was slaked with blood of Rome,
Threw down the dagger—dared depart,
In savage grandeur, home.—
He dared depart in utter scorn
Of men that such a yoke had borne,
Yet left him such a doom!
His only glory was that hour
Of self-upheld abandon'd power.

8.

The Spaniard, [4] when the lust of sway
Had lost its quickening spell,
Cast crowns for rosaries away,
An empire for a cell;
A strict accountant of his beads,
A subtle disputant on creeds,
His dotage trifled well:
Yet better had he neither known
A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

9.

But thou—from thy reluctant hand
The thunderbolt is wrung—
Too late thou leav'st the high command
To which thy weakness clung;
All Evil Spirit as thou art,
It is enough to grieve the heart,
To see thine own unstrung;
To think that God's fair world hath been
The footstool of a thing so mean;

10.

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,
Who thus can hoard his own!
And Monarchs bow'd the trembling limb,
And thank'd him for a throne!
Fair Freedom! we may hold thee dear,
When thus thy mightiest foes their fear
In humblest guise have shown.
Oh! ne'er may tyrant leave behind
A brighter name to lure mankind!

11.

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,
Nor written thus in vain—
Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,
Or deepen every stain—
If thou hadst died as honour dies,
Some new Napoleon might arise,
To shame the world again—
But who would soar the solar height,
To set in such a starless night?

12.

Weigh'd in the balance, hero dust
Is vile as vulgar clay;
Thy scales, Mortality! are just
To all that pass away;
But yet methought the living great
Some higher sparks should animate,
To dazzle and dismay;
Nor deem'd Contempt could thus make mirth
Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

13.

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,
Thy still imperial bride;
How bears her breast the torturing hour?
Still clings she to thy side?
Must she too bend, must she too share
Thy late repentance, long despair,
Thou throneless Homicide?
If still she loves thee, hoard that gem,
'Tis worth thy vanish'd diadem!

14.

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,
And gaze upon the sea;
That element may meet thy smile,
It ne'er was ruled by thee!
Or trace with thine all idle hand
In loitering mood upon the sand
That Earth is now as free!
That Corinth's pedagogue hath now
Transferr'd his by-word to thy brow.

15.

Thou Timour! in his captive's cage [5]
What thoughts will there be thine,
While brooding in thy prison'd rage?
But one—"The world *was* mine:"
Unless, like he of Babylon,
All sense is with thy sceptre gone,
Life will not long confine
That spirit pour'd so widely forth—
So long obey'd—so little worth!

16.

Or like the thief of fire from heaven, [6]
Wilt thou withstand the shock?
And share with him, the unforgiven,
His vulture and his rock!
Foredoom'd by God—by man accurst,
And that last act, though not thy worst,
The very Fiend's arch mock; [7]
He in his fall preserved his pride,
And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

NOTES

TO THE

ODE TO NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

Note 1, page 165, line 2.

The rapture of the strife.

Certaminis *gaudia*, the expression of Attila in his harangue to his army, previous to the battle of Chalons, given in Cassiodorus.

Note 2, page 166, line 1.

He who of old would rend the oak.

Milo.

Note 3, page 166, line 10.

The Roman, when his burning heart.

Sylla.

Note 4, page 167, line 1.

The Spaniard, when the lust of sway.

Charles V.

Note 5, page 170, line 10.

Thou Timour! in his captive's cage.

The cage of Bajazet, by order of Tamerlane.

Note 6, page 171, line 1.

Or like the thief of fire from heaven.

Prometheus.

Note 7, page 171, line 7.

The very Fiend's arch mock.

" The fiend's arch mock—
" To lip a wanton, and suppose her chaste."
Shakspeare.

MONODY

ON THE

DEATH OF THE RIGHT HON. R. B. SHERIDAN.

SPOKEN AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

MONODY

ON THE

DEATH OF THE RIGHT HON. R. B. SHERIDAN.

When the last sunshine of expiring day
In summer's twilight weeps itself away,
Who hath not felt the softness of the hour
Sink on the heart, as dew along the flower?
With a pure feeling which absorbs and awes
While Nature makes that melancholy pause,
Her breathing moment on the bridge where Time
Of light and darkness forms an arch sublime,
Who hath not shared that calm so still and deep,
The voiceless thought which would not speak but weep,
A holy concord—and a bright regret,
A glorious sympathy with suns that set?

'Tis not harsh sorrow—but a tenderer woe,
Nameless, but dear to gentle hearts below,
Felt without bitterness—but full and clear,
A sweet dejection—a transparent tear,
Unmix'd with worldly grief or selfish stain,
Shed without shame—and secret without pain.

Even as the tenderness that hour instils
When Summer's day declines along the hills,
So feels the fulness of our heart and eyes
When all of Genius which can perish dies.
A mighty Spirit is eclipsed—a Power
Hath pass'd from day to darkness—to whose hour
Of light no likeness is bequeath'd—no name,
Focus at once of all the rays of Fame!
The flash of Wit—the bright Intelligence,
The beam of Song—the blaze of Eloquence,
Set with their Sun—but still have left behind
The enduring produce of immortal Mind;
Fruits of a genial morn, and glorious noon,
A deathless part of him who died too soon.
But small that portion of the wondrous whole,
These sparkling segments of that circling soul,

Which all embraced—and lighten'd over all,
To cheer—to pierce—to please—or to appal.
From the charm'd council to the festive board,
Of human feelings the unbounded lord;
In whose acclaim the loftiest voices vied,
The praised—the proud—who made his praise their pride.
When the loud cry of trampled Hindostan [1]
Arose to Heaven in her appeal from man,
His was the thunder—his the avenging rod,
The wrath—the delegated voice of God!
Which shook the nations through his lips—and blazed
Till vanquish'd senates trembled as they praised.

And here, oh! here, where yet all young and warm
The gay creations of his spirit charm,
The matchless dialogue—the deathless wit,
Which knew not what it was to intermit;
The glowing portraits, fresh from life, that bring
Home to our hearts the truth from which they spring;
These wondrous beings of his Fancy, wrought
To fulness by the fiat of his thought,
Here in their first abode you still may meet,
Bright with the hues of his Promethean heat;
A halo of the light of other days,
Which still the splendour of its orb betrays.

But should there be to whom the fatal blight
Of failing Wisdom yields a base delight,
Men who exult when minds of heavenly tone
Jar in the music which was born their own,
Still let them pause—Ah! little do they know
That what to them seem'd Vice might be but Woe.
Hard is his fate on whom the public gaze
Is fix'd for ever to detract or praise;
Repose denies her requiem to his name,
And Folly loves the martyrdom of Fame.
The secret enemy whose sleepless eye
Stands sentinel—accuser—judge—and spy,
The foe—the fool—the jealous—and the vain,
The envious who but breathe in others' pain,
Behold the host! delighting to deprave,
Who track the steps of Glory to the grave,
Watch every fault that daring Genius owes
Half to the ardour which its birth bestows,
Distort the truth, accumulate the lie,
And pile the Pyramid of Calumny!
These are his portion—but if join'd to these
Gaunt Poverty should league with deep Disease,
If the high Spirit must forget to soar,
And stoop to strive with Misery at the door,

To soothe Indignity—and face to face
Meet sordid Rage—and wrestle with Disgrace,
To find in Hope but the renew'd caress,
The serpent-fold of further Faithlessness,—
If such may be the Ills which men assail,
What marvel if at last the mightiest fail?
Breasts to whom all the strength of feeling given
Bear hearts electric—charged with fire from Heaven,
Black with the rude collision, inly torn,
By clouds surrounded, and on whirlwinds borne,
Driven o'er the lowering atmosphere that nurst
Thoughts which have turn'd to thunder—scorch—and burst.
But far from us and from our mimic scene
Such things should be—if such have ever been;
Ours be the gentler wish, the kinder task,
To give the tribute Glory need not ask,
To mourn the vanish'd beam—and add our mite
Of praise in payment of a long delight.
Ye Orators! whom yet our councils yield,
Mourn for the veteran Hero of your field!
The worthy rival of the wondrous *Three!* (2)
Whose words were sparks of Immortality!
Ye Bards! to whom the Drama's Muse is dear,
He was your Master—emulate him *here!*

Ye men of wit and social eloquence!
He was your brother—bear his ashes hence!
While Powers of mind almost of boundless range,
Complete in kind—as various in their change,
While Eloquence—Wit—Poesy—and Mirth,
That humbler Harmonist of care on Earth,
Survive within our souls—while lives our sense
Of pride in Merit's proud pre-eminence,
Long shall we seek his likeness—long in vain,
And turn to all of him which may remain,
Sighing that Nature form'd but one such man,
And broke the die—in moulding Sheridan!

NOTES

TO THE

MONODY ON SHERIDAN.

Note 1, page 179, line 7.

When the loud cry of trampled Hindostan.

See Fox, Burke, and Pitt's eulogy on Mr. Sheridan's speech on the charges exhibited against Mr. Hastings in the House of Commons. Mr. Pitt entreated the House to adjourn, to give time for a calmer consideration of the question than could then occur after the immediate effect of that oration.

Note 2, page 181, line 21.

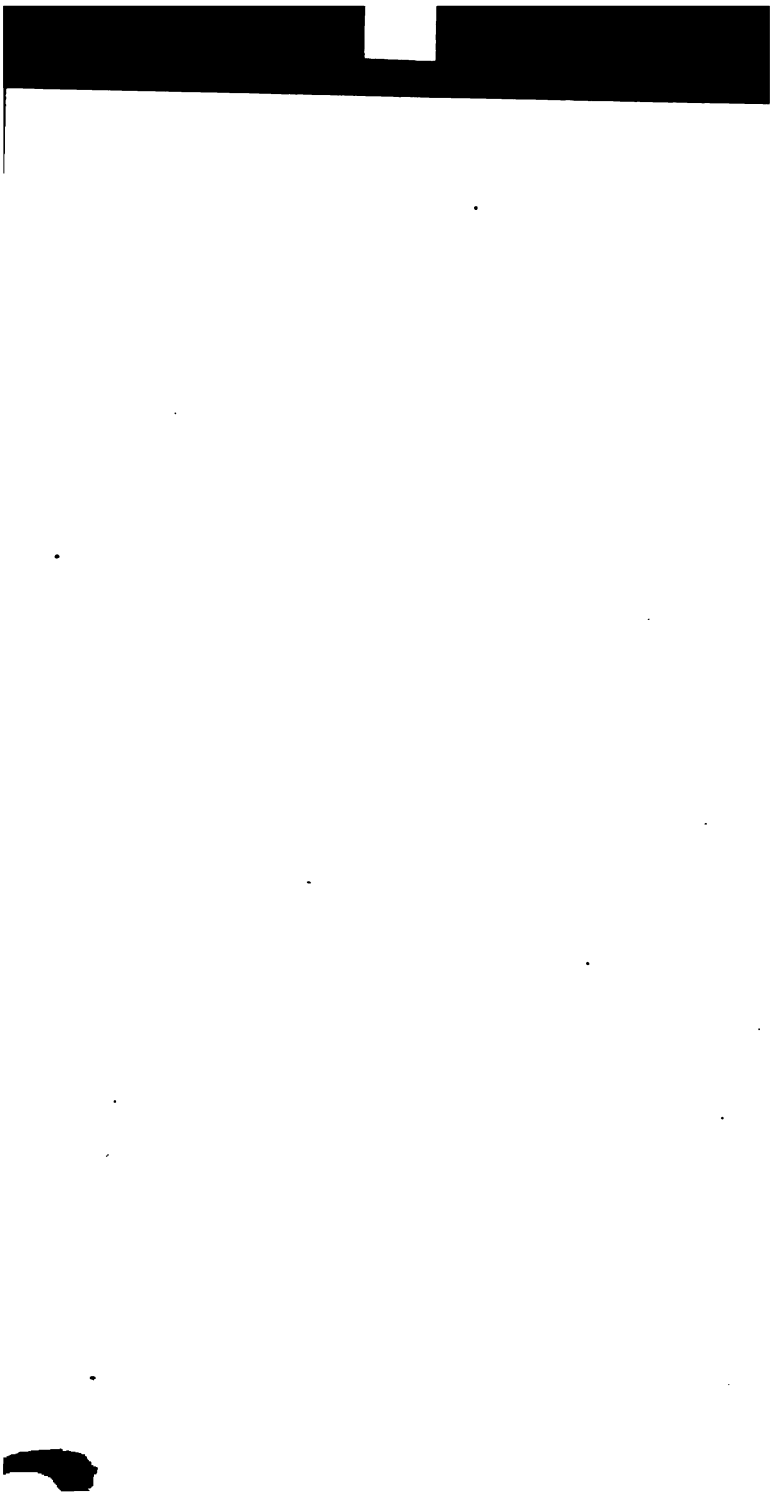
The worthy rival of the wondrous Three!

Fox—Pitt—Burke.

[redacted]

THE

LAMENT OF TASSO.



At Ferrara (in the library) are preserved the original MSS. of Tasso's Gierusalemme and of Guarini's Pastor Fido, with letters of Tasso, one from Titian to Ariosto; and the inkstand and chair, the tomb and the house of the latter. But as misfortune has a greater interest for posterity, and little or none for the cotemporary, the cell where Tasso was confined in the hospital of St. Anna attracts a more fixed attention than the residence or the monument of Ariosto—at least it had this effect on me. There are two inscriptions, one on the outer gate, the second over the cell itself, inviting, unnecessarily, the wonder and the indignation of the spectator. Ferrara is much decayed, and depopulated; the castle still exists entire; and I saw the court where Parisina and Hugo were beheaded, according to the annal of Gibbon.

THE

LAMENT OF TASSO.

I.

Long years!—It tries the thrilling frame to bear
And eagle-spirit of a Child of Song—
Long years of outrage, calumny, and wrong;
Imputed madness, prison'd solitude,
And the mind's canker in its savage mood,
When the impatient thirst of light and air
Parches the heart; and the abhorred grate,
Marring the sunbeams with its hideous shade,
Works through the throbbing eyeball to the brain
With a hot sense of heaviness and pain;
And bare, at once, Captivity display'd
Stands scoffing through the never-open'd gate,
Which nothing through its bars admits, save day
And tasteless food, which I have eat alone

Till its unsocial bitterness is gone;
And I can banquet like a beast of prey,
Sullen and lonely, couching in the cave
Which is my lair, and—it may be—my grave.
All this hath somewhat worn me, and may wear,
But must be borne. I stoop not to despair;
For I have battled with mine agony,
And made me wings wherewith to overfly
The narrow circus of my dungeon wall,
And freed the Holy Sepulchre from thrall;
And revell'd among men and things divine,
And pour'd my spirit over Palestine,
In honour of the sacred war for him,
The God who was on earth and is in heaven,
For he hath strengthen'd me in heart and limb.
That through this sufferance I might be forgiven,
I have employ'd my penance to record
How Salem's shrine was won, and how adored.

II.

But this is o'er—my pleasant task is done:—
My long-sustaining friend of many years!
If I do blot thy final page with tears,
Know, that my sorrows have wrung from me none.

But thou, my young creation! my soul's child!
Which ever playing round me came and smiled,
And woo'd me from myself with thy sweet sight,
Thou too art gone—and so is my delight:
And therefore do I weep and inly bleed
With this last bruise upon a broken reed.
Thou too art ended—what is left me now?
For I have anguish yet to bear—and how?
I know not that—but in the innate force
Of my own spirit shall be found resource.
I have not sunk, for I had no remorse,
Nor cause for such: they call'd me mad—and why?
Oh Leonora! wilt not *thou* reply?
I was indeed delirious in my heart
To lift my love so lofty as thou art;
But still my frenzy was not of the mind;
I knew my fault, and feel my punishment
Not less because I suffer it unbent.
That thou wert beautiful, and I not blind,
Hath been the sin which shuts me from mankind;
But let them go, or torture as they will,
My heart can multiply thine image still;
Successful love may sate itself away,
The wretched are the faithful; 'tis their fate

To have all feeling save the one decay,
And every passion into one dilate,
As rapid rivers into ocean pour;
But ours is fathomless, and hath no shore.

III.

Above me, hark! the long and maniac cry
Of minds and bodies in captivity.
And hark! the lash and the increasing howl,
And the half-inarticulate blasphemy!
There be some here with worse than frenzy foul,
Some who do still goad on the o'er-labour'd mind,
And dim the little light that's left behind
With needless torture, as their tyrant will
Is wound up to the lust of doing ill:
With these and with their victims am I class'd,
'Mid sounds and sights like these long years have pass'd;
'Mid sights and sounds like these my life may close:
So let it be—for then I shall repose.

IV.

I have been patient, let me be so yet;
I had forgotten half I would forget,
But it revives—oh! would it were my lot
To be forgetful as I am forgot!—

Feel I not wroth with those who bade me dwell
In this vast lazar-house of many woes?
Where laughter is not mirth, nor thought the mind,
Nor words a language, nor ev'n men mankind;
Where cries reply to curses, shrieks to blows,
And each is tortured in his separate hell—
For we are crowded in our solitudes—
Many, but each divided by the wall,
Which echoes Madness in her babbling moods;—
While all can hear, none heed his neighbour's call—
None! save that One, the veriest wretch of all,
Who was not made to be the mate of these,
Nor bound between Distraction and Disease.
Feel I not wroth with those who placed me here?
Who have debased me in the minds of men,
Debarring me the usage of my own,
Blighting my life in best of its career,
Branding my thoughts as things to shun and fear?
Would I not pay them back these pangs again,
And teach them inward sorrow's stifled groan?
The struggle to be calm, and cold distress,
Which undermines our Stoical success?
No!—still too proud to be vindictive—I
Have pardon'd princes' insults, and would die.

Yes, Sister of my Sovereign! for thy sake
I weed all bitterness from out my breast,
It hath no business where *thou* art a guest;
Thy brother hates—but I can not detest;
Thou pitiest not—but I can not forsake.

V.

Look on a love which knows not to despair,
But all unquench'd is still my better part,
Dwelling deep in my shut and silent heart
As dwells the gather'd lightning in its cloud,
Encompass'd with its dark and rolling shroud,
Till struck,—forth flies the all-ethereal dart!
And thus at the collision of thy name
The vivid thought still flashes through my frame,
And for a moment all things as they were
Flit by me;—they are gone—I am the same.
And yet my love without ambition grew;
I knew thy state, my station, and I knew
A princess was no love-mate for a bard;
I told it not, I breathed it not, it was
Sufficient to itself, its own reward;
And if my eyes reveal'd it, they, alas!
Were punish'd by the silentness of thine,
And yet I did not venture to repine.

Thou wert to me a crystal-girded shrine,
Worshipp'd at holy distance, and around
Hallow'd and meekly kiss'd the saintly ground;
Not for thou wert a princess, but that Love
Had robed thee with a glory, and array'd
Thy lineaments in beauty that dismay'd—
Oh! not dismay'd—but awed, like One above;
And in that sweet severity there was
A something which all softness did surpass—
I know not how—thy genius master'd mine—
My star stood still before thee:—if it were
Presumptuous thus to love without design,
That sad fatality hath cost me dear;
But thou art dearest still, and I should be
Fit for this cell, which wrongs me, but for *thee.*
The very love which lock'd me to my chain
Hath lighten'd half its weight; and for the rest,
Though heavy, lent me vigour to sustain,
And look to thee with undivided breast,
And foil the ingenuity of Pain.

VI.

It is no marvel—from my very birth
My soul was drunk with love, which did pervade

And mingle with whate'er I saw on earth;
Of objects all inanimate I made
Idols, and out of wild and lonely flowers,
And rocks, whereby they grew, a paradise,
Where I did lay me down within the shade
Of waving trees, and dream'd uncounted hours,
Though I was chid for wandering; and the wise
Shook their white aged heads o'er me, and said
Of such materials wretched men were made,
And such a truant boy would end in woe,
And that the only lesson was a blow;
And then they smote me, and I did not weep,
But cursed them in my heart, and to my haunt
Return'd and wept alone, and dream'd again
The visions which arise without a sleep.
And with my years my soul began to pant
With feelings of strange tumult and soft pain;
And the whole heart exhaled into One Want,
But undefined and wandering, till the day
I found the thing I sought—and that was thee;
And then I lost my being all to be
Absorb'd in thine—the world was past away—
Thou didst annihilate the earth to me!

VII.

I loved all solitude—but little thought
To spend I know not what of life, remote
From all communion with existence, save
The maniac and his tyrant; had I been
Their fellow, many years ere this had seen
My mind like theirs corrupted to its grave,
But who hath seen me writhe, or heard me rave?
Perchance in such a cell we suffer more
Than the wreck'd sailor on his desert shore;
The world is all before him—*mine* is *here*,
Scarce twice the space they must accord my bier.
What though *he* perish, he may lift his eye
And with a dying glance upbraid the sky—
I will not raise my own in such reproof,
Although 'tis clouded by my dungeon roof.

VIII.

Yet do I feel at times my mind decline,
But with a sense of its decay:—I see
Unwonted lights along my prison shine,
And a strange demon, who is vexing me
With pilfering pranks and petty pains, below
The feeling of the healthful and the free;
But much to One, who long hath suffer'd so,

Sickness of heart, and narrowness of place,
And all that may be borne, or can debase.
I thought mine enemies had been but man,
But spirits may be leagued with them—all Earth
Abandons—Heaven forgets me;—in the dearth
Of such defence the Powers of Evil can,
It may be, tempt me further, and prevail
Against the outworn creature they assail.
Why in this furnace is my spirit proved
Like steel in tempering fire? because I loved?
Because I loved what not to love, and see,
Was more or less than mortal, and than me.

IX.

I once was quick in feeling—that is o'er;—
My scars are callous, or I should have dash'd
My brain against these bars as the sun flash'd
In mockery through them;—if I bear and bore
The much I have recounted, and the more
Which hath no words, 'tis that I would not die
And sanction with self-slaughter the dull lie
Which snared me here, and with the brand of shame
Stamp madness deep into my memory,
And woo compassion to a blighted name,
Sealing the sentence which my foes proclaim.

No—it shall be immortal!—and I make
A future temple of my present cell,
Which nations yet shall visit for my sake.
While thou, Ferrara! when no longer dwell
The ducal chiefs within thee, shalt fall down,
And crumbling piecemeal view thy hearthless halls,
A poet's wreath shall be thine only crown,
A poet's dungeon thy most far renown,
While strangers wonder o'er thy unpeopled walls!
And thou, Leonora! thou—who wert ashamed
That such as I could love—who blush'd to hear
To less than monarchs that thou couldst be dear,
Go! tell thy brother that my heart, untamed
By grief, years, weariness—and it may be
A taint of that he would impute to me—
From long infection of a den like this,
Where the mind rots congenial with the abyss,
Adores thee still;—and add—that when the towers
And battlements which guard his joyous hours
Of banquet, dance, and revel, are forgot,
Or left untended in a dull repose,
This—this shall be a consecrated spot!
But Thou—when all that Birth and Beauty throws
Of magic round thee is extinct—shalt have
One half the laurel which o'ershades my grave.

No power in death can tear our names apart,
As none in life could rend thee from my heart.
Yes, Leonora! it shall be our fate
To be entwined for ever—but too late!

POEMS.

POEMS.

WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM.

1.

As o'er the cold sepulchral stone
Some name arrests the passer-by;
Thus, when thou view'st this page alone,
May mine attract thy pensive eye!

2.

And when by thee that name is read,
Perchance in some succeeding year,
Reflect on me as on the dead,
And think my heart is buried here.

September 14*th*, 1809.

TO * * *

Oh Lady! when I left the shore,
The distant shore, which gave me birth,
I hardly thought to grieve once more,
To quit another spot on earth:
Yet here, amidst this barren isle,
Where panting Nature droops the head,
Where only thou art seen to smile,
I view my parting hour with dread.
Though far from Albin's craggy shore,
Divided by the dark-blue main;
A few, brief, rolling seasons o'er,
Perchance I view her cliffs again:
But wheresoe'er I now may roam,
Through scorching clime, and varied sea,
Though Time restore me to my home,
I ne'er shall bend mine eyes on thee:
On thee, in whom at once conspire
All charms which heedless hearts can move,
Whom but to see is to admire,
And, oh! forgive the word—to love.

Forgive the word, in one who ne'er
With such a word can more offend;
And since thy heart I cannot share,
Believe me, what I am, thy friend.
And who so cold as look on thee,
Thou lovely wand'rer, and be less?
Nor be, what man should ever be,
The friend of Beauty in distress?
Ah! who would think that form had past
Through Danger's most destructive path,
Had braved the death-wing'd tempest's blast,
And 'scaped a tyrant's fiercer wrath?
Lady! when I shall view the walls
Where free Byzantium once arose;
And Stamboul's Oriental halls
The Turkish tyrants now enclose;
Though mightiest in the lists of fame,
That glorious city still shall be;
On me 'twill hold a dearer claim,
As spot of thy nativity:
And though I bid thee now farewell,
When I behold that wond'rous scene,
Since where thou art I may not dwell,
'Twill soothe to be, where thou hast been.

September, 1809.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN PASSING THE AMBRACIAN GULF,

NOVEMBER 14, 1809.

1.

THROUGH cloudless skies, in silvery sheen,
Full beams the moon on Actium's coast:
And on these waves, for Egypt's queen,
The ancient world was won and lost.

2.

And now upon the scene I look,
The azure grave of many a Roman;
Where stern Ambition once forsook
His wavering crown to follow woman.

3.

Florence! whom I will love as well
As ever yet was said or sung,
(Since Orpheus sang his spouse from hell)
Whilst thou art fair and I am young;

4.

Sweet Florence! those were pleasant times,
When worlds were staked for ladies' eyes:
Had bards as many realms as rhymes,
Thy charms might raise new Anthonies.

5.

Though Fate forbids such things to be,
Yet, by thine eyes and ringlets curl'd!
I cannot lose a world for thee,
But would not lose thee for a world.

STANZAS

Composed October 11th, 1809, during the night, in a thunder-storm, when the guides had lost the road to Zitza, near the range of mountains formerly called Pindus, in Albania.

1.

CHILL and mirk is the nightly blast,
Where Pindus' mountains rise,
And angry clouds are pouring fast
The vengeance of the skies.

2.

Our guides are gone, our hope is lost,
And lightnings, as they play,
But show where rocks our path have crost,
Or gild the torrent's spray.

3.

Is yon a cot I saw, though low?
When lightning broke the gloom—
How welcome were its shade!—ah, no!
'Tis but a Turkish tomb.

4.

Through sounds of foaming waterfalls,
I hear a voice exclaim—
My way-worn countryman, who calls
On distant England's name.

5.

A shot is fired—by foe or friend?
Another—'tis to tell
The mountain-peasants to descend,
And lead us where they dwell.

6.

Oh! who in such a night will dare
To tempt the wilderness?
And who 'mid thunder peals can hear
Our signal of distress?

7.

And who that heard our shouts would rise
To try the dubious road?
Nor rather deem from nightly cries
That outlaws were abroad.

8.

Clouds burst, skies flash, oh, dreadful hour!
More fiercely pours the storm!
Yet here one thought has still the power
To keep my bosom warm.

9.

While wand'ring through each broken path,
O'er brake and craggy brow;
While elements exhaust their wrath,
Sweet Florence, where art thou?

10.

Not on the sea, not on the sea;
Thy bark hath long been gone:
Oh, may the storm that pours on me
Bow down my head alone!

11.

Full swiftly blew the swift Siroc,
When last I press'd thy lip;
And long ere now, with foaming shock,
Impell'd thy gallant ship.

12.

Now thou art safe; nay, long ere now
Hast trod the shore of Spain;
'Twere hard if ought so fair as thou
Should linger on the main.

13.

And since I now remember thee
In darkness and in dread,
As in those hours of revelry
Which mirth and music sped;

14.

Do thou amidst the fair white walls,
If Cadiz yet be free,
At times from out her latticed halls
Look o'er the dark blue sea;

15.

Then think upon Calypso's isles,
Endear'd by days gone by;
To others give a thousand smiles,
To me a single sigh.

16.

And when the admiring circle mark
The paleness of thy face,
A half-form'd tear, a transient spark
Of melancholy grace,

17.

Again thou'lt smile, and blushing shun
Some coxcomb's raillery;
Nor own for once thou thought'st of one,
Who ever thinks on thee.

18.

Though smile and sigh alike are vain,
When sever'd hearts repine,
My spirit flies o'er mount and main,
And mourns in search of thine.

WRITTEN AT ATHENS.

JANUARY 16, 1810.

THE spell is broke, the charm is flown!
Thus is it with life's fitful fever:
We madly smile when we should groan;
Delirium is our best deceiver.
Each lucid interval of thought
Recalls the woes of Nature's charter,
And he that acts as wise men ought,
But lives, as saints have died, a martyr.

WRITTEN AFTER SWIMMING FROM SESTOS TO ABYDOS.[1]

MAY 9, 1810.

1.

If, in the month of dark December,
Leander, who was nightly wont
(What maid will not the tale remember?)
To cross thy stream, broad Hellespont!

2.

If, when the wintry tempest roar'd,
He sped to Hero, nothing loth,
And thus of old thy current pour'd,
Fair Venus! how I pity both!

3.

For *me*, degenerate modern wretch,
Though in the genial month of May,
My dripping limbs I faintly stretch,
And think I 've done a feat to-day.

4.

But since he cross'd the rapid tide,
According to the doubtful story,
To woo,—and—Lord knows what beside,
And swam for Love, as I for Glory;

5.

'Twere hard to say who fared the best:
Sad mortals! thus the Gods still plague you!
He lost his labour, I my jest:
For he was drown'd, and I 've the ague.

SONG.

Ζώη μῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ. (2)

ATHENS, 1810.

1.

MAID of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh, give me back my heart!
Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest!
Hear my vow before I go,
Ζώη μῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

2.

By those tresses unconfined,
Woo'd by each Ægean wind;
By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;
By those wild eyes like the roe,
Ζώη μῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

3.

By that lip I long to taste;
By that zone-encircled waist;
By all the token-flowers [3] that tell
What words can never speak so well;
By Love's alternate joy and woe,
Ζώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

4.

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
Think of me, sweet! when alone.
Though I fly to Istambol, [4]
Athens holds my heart and soul:
Can I cease to love thee? No!
Ζώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

TRANSLATION OF THE FAMOUS GREEK WAR SONG,

Δευτε παιδες των Ελλήνων,

Written by Riga, who perished in the attempt to revolutionize Greece. The following translation is as literal as the author could make it in verse: it is of the same measure as that of the original. See vol. i. p. 196.

1.

Sons of the Greeks, arise!
The glorious hour's gone forth,
And, worthy of such ties,
Display who gave us birth.

CHORUS.

Sons of Greeks! let us go
In arms against the foe,
Till their hated blood shall flow
In a river past our feet.

2.

Then manfully despising
The Turkish tyrant's yoke,
Let your country see you rising,
And all her chains are broke.

Brave shades of chiefs and sages,
Behold the coming strife!
Hellénes of past ages,
Oh, start again to life!
At the sound of my trumpet, breaking
Your sleep, oh, join with me!
And the seven-hill'd [5] city seeking,
Fight, conquer, till we're free.
Sons of Greeks, &c.

3.

Sparta, Sparta, why in slumbers
Lethargic dost thou lie?
Awake, and join thy numbers
With Athens, old ally!
Leonidas recalling,
That chief of ancient song,
Who saved ye once from falling,
The terrible! the strong!
Who made that bold diversion
In old Thermopylæ,
And warring with the Persian
To keep his country free;

With his three hundred waging
The battle, long he stood,
And like a lion raging,
Expired in seas of blood.

Sons of Greeks, &c.

TRANSLATION OF THE ROMAIC SONG,

" Μπενω μες 'Ισ' πέριβόλι
" 'Ωραιοτατη Χάηδή," &c.

The song from which this is taken is a great favourite with the young girls of Athens of all classes. Their manner of singing it is by verses in rotation, the whole number present joining in the chorus. I have heard it frequently at our "χόροι" in the winter of 1810-11. The air is plaintive and pretty.

1.

I ENTER thy garden of roses,
Beloved and fair Haideé,
Each morning where Flora reposes,
For surely I see her in thee.
Oh, Lovely! thus low I implore thee,
Receive this fond truth from my tongue,
Which utters its song to adore thee,
Yet trembles for what it has sung;
As the branch, at the bidding of Nature,
Adds fragrance and fruit to the tree,
Through her eyes, through her every feature,
Shines the soul of the young Haideé.

2.

But the loveliest garden grows hateful
When Love has abandon'd the bowers;
Bring me hemlock—since mine is ungrateful,
That herb is more fragrant than flowers.
The poison, when pour'd from the chalice,
Will deeply embitter the bowl;
But when drunk to escape from thy malice,
The draught shall be sweet to my soul.
Too cruel! in vain I implore thee
My heart from these horrors to save:
Will nought to my bosom restore thee?
Then open the gates of the grave.

3.

As the chief who to combat advances
Secure of his conquest before,
Thus thou, with those eyes for thy lances,
Hast pierced through my heart to its core.
Ah, tell me, my soul! must I perish
By pangs which a smile would dispel?
Would the hope, which thou once bad'st me cherish,
For torture repay me too well?

Now sad is the garden of roses,
  Beloved but false Haideé!
There Flora all wither'd reposes,
  And mourns o'er thine absence with me.

WRITTEN BENEATH A PICTURE.

1.

Dear object of defeated care!
  Though now of Love and thee bereft,
To reconcile me with despair
  Thine image and my tears are left.

2.

'Tis said with Sorrow Time can cope;
  But this I feel can ne'er be true:
For by the death-blow of my Hope
  My Memory immortal grew.

ON PARTING.

1.

THE kiss, dear maid! thy lip has left,
Shall never part from mine,
Till happier hours restore the gift
Untainted back to thine.

2.

Thy parting glance, which fondly beams,
An equal love may see:
The tear that from thine eyelid streams
Can weep no change in me.

3.

I ask no pledge to make me blest
In gazing when alone;
Nor one memorial for a breast,
Whose thoughts are all thine own.

4.

Nor need I write—to tell the tale
My pen were doubly weak:
Oh! what can idle words avail,
Unless the heart could speak?

5.

By day or night, in weal or woe,
That heart, no longer free,
Must bear the love it cannot show,
And silent ache for thee.

TO THYRZA.

WITHOUT a stone to mark the spot,
And say, what Truth might well have said,
By all, save one, perchance forgot,
Ah, wherefore art thou lowly laid?
By many a shore and many a sea
Divided, yet beloved in vain;
The past, the future fled to thee
To bid us meet—no—ne'er again!
Could this have been—a word, a look
That softly said, "We part in peace,"
Had taught my bosom how to brook,
With fainter sighs, thy soul's release.
And didst thou not, since Death for thee
Prepared a light and pangless dart,
Once long for him thou ne'er shalt see,
Who held, and holds thee in his heart?
Oh! who like him had watch'd thee here?
Or sadly mark'd thy glazing eye,
In that dread hour ere death appear,
When silent Sorrow fears to sigh,

Till all was past? But when no more
'Twas thine to reck of human woe,
Affection's heart-drops, gushing o'er,
Had flow'd as fast—as now they flow.
Shall they not flow, when many a day
In these, to me, deserted towers,
Ere call'd but for a time away,
Affection's mingling tears were ours?
Ours too the glance none saw beside;
The smile none else might understand;
The whisper'd thought of hearts allied,
The pressure of the thrilling hand;
The kiss so guiltless and refined
That Love each warmer wish forbore;
Those eyes proclaim'd so pure a mind,
Even passion blush'd to plead for more.
The tone, that taught me to rejoice,
When prone, unlike thee, to repine;
The song, celestial from thy voice,
But sweet to me from none but thine;
The pledge we wore—I wear it still,
But where is thine?—ah, where art thou?
Oft have I borne the weight of ill,
But never bent beneath till now!

Well hast thou left in life's best bloom
The cup of woe for me to drain.
If rest alone be in the tomb,
I would not wish thee here again;
But if in worlds more blest than this
Thy virtues seek a fitter sphere,
Impart some portion of thy bliss,
To wean me from mine anguish here.
Teach me—too early taught by thee!
To bear, forgiving and forgiven:
On earth thy love was such to me;
It fain would form my hope in heaven!

STANZAS.

1.

Away, away, ye notes of woe!
Be silent, thou once soothing strain,
Or I must flee from hence, for, oh!
I dare not trust those sounds again.
To me they speak of brighter days—
But lull the chords, for now, alas!
I must not think, I may not gaze
On what I am—on what I was.

2.

The voice that made those sounds more sweet
Is hush'd, and all their charms are fled;
And now their softest notes repeat
A dirge, an anthem o'er the dead!
Yes, Thyrza! yes, they breathe of thee,
Beloved dust! since dust thou art;
And all that once was harmony
Is worse than discord to my heart!

3.

'Tis silent all!—but on my ear
The well-remember'd echoes thrill;
I hear a voice I would not hear,
A voice that now might well be still,
Yet oft my doubting soul 'twill shake:
Even slumber owns its gentle tone,
Till consciousness will vainly wake
To listen, though the dream be flown.

4.

Sweet Thyrza! waking as in sleep,
Thou art but now a lovely dream;
A star that trembled o'er the deep,
Then turn'd from earth its tender beam.
But he, who through life's dreary way
Must pass, when heaven is veil'd in wrath,
Will long lament the vanish'd ray
That scatter'd gladness o'er his path.

TO THYRZA.

1.

ONE struggle more, and I am free
From pangs that rend my heart in twain;
One last long sigh to love and thee,
Then back to busy life again.
It suits me well to mingle now
With things that never pleased before:
Though every joy is fled below,
What future grief can touch me more?

2.

Then bring me wine, the banquet bring;
Man was not form'd to live alone:
I'll be that light unmeaning thing
That smiles with all, and weeps with none.
It was not thus in days more dear,
It never would have been, but thou
Hast fled, and left me lonely here;
Thou 'rt nothing, all are nothing now.

3.

In vain my lyre would lightly breathe!
The smile that sorrow fain would wear
But mocks the woe that lurks beneath,
Like roses o'er a sepulchre.
Though gay companions o'er the bowl
Dispel awhile the sense of ill;
Though pleasure fires the maddening soul,
The heart—the heart is lonely still!

4.

On many a lone and lovely night
It sooth'd to gaze upon the sky;
For then I deem'd the heavenly light
Shone sweetly on thy pensive eye:
And oft I thought at Cynthia's noon,
When sailing o'er the Ægean wave,
"Now Thyrza gazes on that moon—"
Alas, it gleam'd upon her grave!

5.

When stretch'd on fever's sleepless bed,
And sickness shrunk my throbbing veins,
"'Tis comfort still," I faintly said,
"That Thyrza cannot know my pains:"

Like freedom to the time-worn slave,
A boon 'tis idle then to give,
Relenting Nature vainly gave
My life, when Thyrza ceased to live!

6.

My Thyrza's pledge in better days,
When love and life alike were new!
How different now thou meet'st my gaze!
How tinged by time with sorrow's hue!
The heart that gave itself with thee
Is silent—ah, were mine as still!
Though cold as e'en the dead can be,
It feels, it sickens with the chill.

7.

Thou bitter pledge! thou mournful token!
Though painful, welcome to my breast!
Still, still, preserve that love unbroken,
Or break the heart to which thou 'rt prest!
Time tempers love, but not removes,
More hallow'd when its hope is fled:
Oh! what are thousand living loves
To that which cannot quit the dead?

EUTHANASIA.

1.

When Time, or soon or late, shall bring
The dreamless sleep that lulls the dead,
Oblivion! may thy languid wing
Wave gently o'er my dying bed!

2.

No band of friends or heirs be there,
To weep, or wish, the coming blow:
No maiden, with dishevell'd hair,
To feel, or feign, decorous woe.

3.

But silent let me sink to Earth,
With no officious mourners near:
I would not mar one hour of mirth,
Nor startle friendship with a fear.

4.

Yet Love, if Love in such an hour
Could nobly check its useless sighs,
Might then exert its latest power
In her who lives and him who dies.

5.

'Twere sweet, my Psyche! to the last
Thy features still serene to see:
Forgetful of its struggles past,
E'en Pain itself should smile on thee.

6.

But vain the wish—for Beauty still
Will shrink, as shrinks the ebbing breath;
And woman's tears, produced at will,
Deceive in life, unman in death.

7.

Then lonely be my latest hour,
Without regret, without a groan!
For thousands Death hath ceased to lower,
And pain been transient or unknown.

8.

" Ay, but to die, and go," alas!
Where all have gone, and all must go!
To be the nothing that I was
Ere born to life and living woe!

9.

Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'Tis something better not to be.

STANZAS.

" Heu quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam tui meminisse !"

1.

And thou art dead, as young and fair
As aught of mortal birth;
And form so soft, and charms so rare,
Too soon return'd to Earth!
Though Earth received them in her bed,
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
In carelessness or mirth,
There is an eye which could not brook
A moment on that grave to look.

2.

I will not ask where thou liest low,
Nor gaze upon the spot;
There flowers or weeds at will may grow,
So I behold them not:
It is enough for me to prove
That what I loved and long must love
Like common earth can rot;

To me there needs no stone to tell,
'Tis Nothing that I loved so well.

3.

Yet did I love thee to the last
As fervently as thou,
Who didst not change through all the past,
And canst not alter now.
The love where Death has set his seal,
Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
Nor falsehood disavow:
And, what were worse, thou canst not see
Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

4.

The better days of life were ours;
The worst can be but mine:
The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers,
Shall never more be thine.
The silence of that dreamless sleep
I envy now too much to weep;
Nor need I to repine
That all those charms have pass'd away;
I might have watch'd through long decay.

5.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatch'd
Must fall the earliest prey;
Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,
The leaves must drop away:
And yet it were a greater grief
To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,
Than see it pluck'd to-day;
Since earthly eye but ill can bear
To trace the change to foul from fair.

6.

I know not if I could have borne
To see thy beauties fade;
The night that follow'd such a morn
Had worn a deeper shade:
Thy day without a cloud hath past,
And thou wert lovely to the last;
Extinguish'd, not decay'd;
As stars that shoot along the sky
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

7.

As once I wept, if I could weep
My tears might well be shed,

To think I was not near to keep
One vigil o'er thy bed;
To gaze, how fondly! on thy face,
To fold thee in a faint embrace,
Uphold thy drooping head;
And show that love, however vain,
Nor thou nor I can feel again.

8.

Yet how much less it were to gain,
Though thou hast left me free,
The loveliest things that still remain,
Than thus remember thee!
The all of thine that cannot die
Through dark and dread Eternity,
Returns again to me,
And more thy buried love endears
Than aught, except its living years.

STANZAS.

1.

If sometimes in the haunts of men
Thine image from my breast may fade,
The lonely hour presents again
The semblance of thy gentle shade:
And now that sad and silent hour
Thus much of thee can still restore,
And sorrow unobserved may pour
The plaint she dare not speak before.

2.

Oh, pardon that in crowds awhile,
I waste one thought I owe to thee,
And, self-condemn'd, appear to smile,
Unfaithful to thy Memory!
Nor deem that memory less dear,
That then I seem not to repine;
I would not fools should overhear
One sigh that should be wholly *thine*.

3.

If not the goblet pass unquaff'd,
It is not drain'd to banish care;
The cup must hold a deadlier draught,
That brings a Lethe for despair.
And could Oblivion set my soul
From all her troubled visions free,
I'd dash to earth the sweetest bowl
That drown'd a single thought of thee.

4.

For wert thou vanish'd from my mind,
Where could my vacant bosom turn?
And who would then remain behind
To honour thine abandon'd Urn?
No, No—it is my sorrow's pride
That last dear duty to fulfil;
Though all the world forget beside,
'Tis meet that I remember still.

5.

For well I know, that such had been
Thy gentle care for him, who now

Unmourn'd shall quit this mortal scene,
  Where none regarded him, but thou:
And, Oh! I feel in *that* was given
  A blessing never meant for me;
Thou wert too like a dream of Heaven,
  For earthly Love to merit thee.

March 14*th*, 1812.

ON A CORNELIAN HEART WHICH WAS BROKEN.

1.

Ill-fated Heart! and can it be
  That thou shouldst thus be rent in twain?
Have years of care for thine and thee
  Alike been all employ'd in vain?

2.

Yet precious seems each shatter'd part,
  And every fragment dearer grown,
Since he who wears thee, feels thou art
  A fitter emblem of *his own*.

[This poem and the following were written some years ago.]

TO A YOUTHFUL FRIEND.

1.

FEW years have pass'd since thou and I
Were firmest friends, at least in name,
And childhood's gay sincerity
Preserved our feelings long the same.

2.

But now, like me, too well thou know'st
What trifles oft the heart recall;
And those who once have loved the most
Too soon forget they loved at all.

3.

And such the change the heart displays,
So frail is early friendship's reign,
A month's brief lapse, perhaps a day's,
Will view thy mind estranged again.

4.

If so, it never shall be mine
To mourn the loss of such a heart;
The fault was Nature's fault, not thine,
Which made thee fickle as thou art.

5.

As rolls the ocean's changing tide,
So human feelings ebb and flow;
And who would in a breast confide
Where stormy passions ever glow?

6.

It boots not, that together bred,
Our childish days were days of joy;
My spring of life has quickly fled;
Thou, too, hast ceased to be a boy.

7.

And when we bid adieu to youth,
Slaves to the specious world's control,
We sigh a long farewell to truth;
That world corrupts the noblest soul.

8.

Ah, joyous season! when the mind
Dares all things boldly but to lie;
When thought ere spoke is unconfined,
And sparkles in the placid eye.

9.

Not so in Man's maturer years,
When Man himself is but a tool;
When interest sways our hopes and fears,
And all must love and hate by rule.

10.

With fools in kindred vice the same,
We learn at length our faults to blend,
And those, and those alone may claim
The prostituted name of friend.

11.

Such is the common lot of man:
Can we then 'scape from folly free?
Can we reverse the general plan,
Nor be what all in turn must be?

12.

No, for myself, so dark my fate
Through every turn of life hath been;
Man and the world I so much hate,
I care not when I quit the scene.

13.

But thou, with spirit frail and light,
Wilt shine awhile and pass away;
As glow-worms sparkle through the night,
But dare not stand the test of day.

14.

Alas! whenever folly calls
Where parasites and princes meet,
(For cherish'd first in royal halls,
The welcome vices kindly greet)

15.

Ev'n now thou'rt nightly seen to add
One insect to the fluttering crowd;
And still thy trifling heart is glad,
To join the vain, and court the proud.

16.

There dost thou glide from fair to fair,
Still simpering on with eager haste,
As flies along the gay parterre,
That taint the flowers they scarcely taste.

17.

But say, what nymph will prize the flame
Which seems, as marshy vapours move,
To flit along from dame to dame,
An ignis-fatuus gleam of love?

18.

What friend for thee, howe'er inclined,
Will deign to own a kindred care?
Who will debase his manly mind,
For friendship every fool may share?

19.

In time forbear; amidst the throng
No more so base a thing be seen;
No more so idly pass along:
Be something, any thing, but—mean.

TO * * * * * *

1.

WELL! thou art happy, and I feel
That I should thus be happy too;
For still my heart regards thy weal
Warmly, as it was wont to do.

2.

Thy husband's blest—and 'twill impart
Some pangs to view his happier lot:
But let them pass—Oh! how my heart
Would hate him, if he loved thee not!

3.

When late I saw thy favourite child,
I thought my jealous heart would break;
But when th' unconscious infant smiled,
I kiss'd it, for its mother's sake.

4.

I kiss'd it, and repress'd my sighs
Its father in its face to see;
But then it had its mother's eyes,
And they were all to love and me.

5.

Mary, adieu! I must away:
While thou art blest I'll not repine;
But near thee I can never stay;
My heart would soon again be thine.

6.

I deem'd that time, I deem'd that pride
Had quench'd at length my boyish flame;
Nor knew, till seated by thy side,
My heart in all, save hope, the same.

7.

Yet was I calm: I knew the time
My breast would thrill before thy look;
But now to tremble were a crime—
We met, and not a nerve was shook.

8.

I saw thee gaze upon my face,
Yet meet with no confusion there:
One only feeling could'st thou trace;
The sullen calmness of despair.

9.

Away! away! my early dream
Remembrance never must awake:
Oh! where is Lethe's fabled stream?
My foolish heart be still, or break.

FROM THE PORTUGUESE.

In moments to delight devoted,
"My life!" with tend'rest tone, you cry;
Dear words! on which my heart had doted,
If youth could neither fade nor die.
To death even hours like these must roll,
Ah! then repeat those accents never;
Or change "my life!" into "my soul!"
Which, like my love, exists for ever.

IMPROMPTU, IN REPLY TO A FRIEND.

When from the heart where Sorrow sits,
Her dusky shadow mounts too high,
And o'er the changing aspect flits,
And clouds the brow, or fills the eye;
Heed not that gloom, which soon shall sink:
My thoughts their dungeon know too well;
Back to my breast the wanderers shrink,
And droop within their silent cell.

ADDRESS,

SPOKEN AT THE OPENING OF DRURY-LANE THEATRE, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1812.

In one dread night our city saw, and sigh'd,
Bow'd to the dust, the Drama's tower of pride;
In one short hour beheld the blazing fane,
Apollo sink, and Shakspeare cease to reign.

Ye who beheld, (oh! sight admired and mourn'd,
Whose radiance mock'd the ruin it adorn'd!)
Through clouds of fire, the massy fragments riven,
Like Israel's pillar, chase the night from heaven;
Saw the long column of revolving flames
Shake its red shadow o'er the startled Thames,
While thousands, throng'd around the burning dome,
Shrank back appall'd, and trembled for their home,
As glared the volumed blaze, and ghastly shone
The skies, with lightnings awful as their own,
Till blackening ashes and the lonely wall
Usurp'd the Muse's realm, and mark'd her fall;

Say—shall this new, nor less aspiring pile,
Rear'd where once rose the mightiest in our isle,
Know the same favour which the former knew,
A shrine for Shakspeare—worthy him and *you*?

Yes—it shall be—the magic of that name
Defies the scythe of time, the torch of flame;
On the same spot still consecrates the scene,
And bids the Drama *be* where she hath *been*:
This fabric's birth attests the potent spell—
Indulge our honest pride, and say, *How well!*

As soars this fane to emulate the last,
Oh! might we draw our omens from the past,
Some hour propitious to our prayers may boast
Names such as hallow still the dome we lost.
On Drury first your Siddons' thrilling art
O'erwhelm'd the gentlest, storm'd the sternest heart.
On Drury, Garrick's latest laurels grew;
Here your last tears retiring Roscius drew,
Sigh'd his last thanks, and wept his last adieu:
But still for living wit the wreaths may bloom
That only waste their odours o'er the tomb.
Such Drury claim'd and claims—nor you refuse
One tribute to revive his slumbering muse;

With garlands deck your own Menander's head!
Nor hoard your honours idly for the dead!

Dear are the days which made our annals bright,
Ere Garrick fled, or Brinsley ceased to write.
Heirs to their labours, like all high-born heirs,
Vain of *our* ancestry as they of *theirs*;
While thus Remembrance borrows Banquo's glass
To claim the sceptred shadows as they pass,
And we the mirror hold, where imaged shine
Immortal names, emblazon'd on our line,
Pause—ere their feebler offspring you condemn,
Reflect how hard the task to rival them!

Friends of the stage! to whom both Players and Plays
Must sue alike for pardon, or for praise,
Whose judging voice and eye alone direct
The boundless power to cherish or reject;
If e'er frivolity has led to fame,
And made us blush that you forbore to blame;
If e'er the sinking stage could condescend
To soothe the sickly taste, it dare not mend,
All past reproach may present scenes refute,
And censure, wisely loud, be justly mute!

Oh! since your fiat stamps the Drama's laws,
Forbear to mock us with misplaced applause;
So pride shall doubly nerve the actor's powers,
And reason's voice be echo'd back by ours!

This greeting o'er, the ancient rule obey'd,
The Drama's homage by her herald paid,
Receive *our* welcome too, whose every tone
Springs from our hearts, and fain would win your own.
The curtain rises—may our stage unfold
Scenes not unworthy Drury's days of old!
Britons our judges, Nature for our guide,
Still may *we* please—long, long may *you* preside!

TO TIME.

Time! on whose arbitrary wing
The varying hours must flag or fly,
Whose tardy winter, fleeting spring,
But drag or drive us on to die—
Hail thou! who on my birth bestow'd
Those boons to all that know thee known;
Yet better I sustain thy load,
For now I bear the weight alone.
I would not one fond heart should share
The bitter moments thou hast given;
And pardon thee, since thou could'st spare
All that I loved, to peace or heaven.
To them be joy or rest, on me
Thy future ills shall press in vain;
I nothing owe but years to thee,
A debt already paid in pain.
Yet even that pain was some relief;
It felt, but still forgot thy power:
The active agony of grief
Retards, but never counts the hour.

In joy I've sigh'd to think thy flight
Would soon subside from swift to slow;
Thy cloud could overcast the light,
But could not add a night to woe;
For then, however drear and dark,
My soul was suited to thy sky;
One star alone shot forth a spark
To prove thee—not Eternity.
That beam hath sunk, and now thou art
A blank; a thing to count and curse
Through each dull tedious trifling part,
Which all regret, yet all rehearse.
One scene even thou canst not deform;
The limit of thy sloth or speed,
When future wanderers bear the storm
Which we shall sleep too sound to heed:
And I can smile to think how weak
Thine efforts shortly shall be shown,
When all the vengeance thou canst wreak
Must fall upon—a nameless stone.

TRANSLATION OF A ROMAIC LOVE SONG.

1.

Ah! Love was never yet without
The pang, the agony, the doubt,
Which rends my heart with ceaseless sigh,
While day and night roll darkling by.

2.

Without one friend to hear my woe,
I faint, I die beneath the blow.
That Love had arrows, well I knew;
Alas! I find them poison'd too.

3.

Birds, yet in freedom, shun the net,
Which Love around your haunts hath set;
Or circled by his fatal fire,
Your hearts shall burn, your hopes expire.

4.

A bird of free and careless wing
Was I, through many a smiling spring;
But caught within the subtle snare,
I burn, and feebly flutter there.

5.

Who ne'er have loved, and loved in vain,
Can neither feel nor pity pain,
The cold repulse, the look askance,
The lightning of Love's angry glance.

6.

In flattering dreams I deem'd thee mine;
Now hope, and he who hoped, decline;
Like melting wax, or withering flower,
I feel my passion, and thy power.

7.

My light of life! ah, tell me why
That pouting lip, and alter'd eye?
My bird of love! my beauteous mate!
And art thou changed, and canst thou hate?

8.

Mine eyes like wintry streams o'erflow:
What wretch with me would barter woe?
My bird! relent: one note could give
A charm, to bid thy lover live.

9.

My curdling blood, my madd'ning brain,
In silent anguish I sustain;
And still thy heart, without partaking
One pang, exults—while mine is breaking.

10.

Pour me the poison; fear not thou!
Thou canst not murder more than now:
I've lived to curse my natal day,
And Love, that thus can lingering slay.

11.

My wounded soul, my bleeding breast,
Can patience preach thee into rest?
Alas! too late, I dearly know,
That joy is harbinger of woe.

A SONG.

1.

Thou art not false, but thou art fickle,
To those thyself so fondly sought;
The tears that thou hast forced to trickle
Are doubly bitter from that thought:
'Tis this which breaks the heart thou grievest,
Too well thou lov'st—too soon thou leavest.

2.

The wholly false the heart despises,
And spurns deceiver and deceit;
But she who not a thought disguises,
Whose love is as sincere as sweet,—
When she can change who loved so truly,
It feels what mine has felt so newly.

3.

To dream of joy and wake to sorrow
Is doom'd to all who love or live;
And if, when conscious on the morrow,
We scarce our fancy can forgive,

That cheated us in slumber only,
To leave the waking soul more lonely,

4.

What must they feel whom no false vision,
  But truest, tenderest passion warm'd?
Sincere, but swift in sad transition,
  As if a dream alone had charm'd?
Ah! sure such grief is fancy's scheming,
And all thy change can be but dreaming!

ON BEING ASKED WHAT WAS THE "ORIGIN OF LOVE?"

THE "Origin of Love!"—Ah why
That cruel question ask of me,
When thou may'st read in many an eye
He starts to life on seeing thee?
And should'st thou seek his *end* to know:
My heart forebodes, my fears foresee,
He'll linger long in silent woe;
But live—until I cease to be.

REMEMBER HIM, &c.

1.

Remember him, whom passion's power
Severely, deeply, vainly proved:
Remember thou that dangerous hour
When neither fell, though both were loved.

2.

That yielding breast, that melting eye,
Too much invited to be blest:
That gentle prayer, that pleading sigh,
The wilder wish reproved, represt.

3.

Oh! let me feel that all I lost,
But saved thee all that conscience fears;
And blush for every pang it cost
To spare the vain remorse of years.

4.

Yet think of this when many a tongue,
Whose busy accents whisper blame,
Would do the heart that loved thee wrong,
And brand a nearly blighted name.

5.

Think that, whate'er to others, thou
Hast seen each selfish thought subdued:
I bless thy purer soul even now,
Even now, in midnight solitude.

6.

Oh, God! that we had met in time,
Our hearts as fond, thy hand more free;
When thou hadst loved without a crime,
And I been less unworthy thee!

7.

Far may thy days, as heretofore,
From this our gaudy world be past!
And, that too bitter moment o'er,
Oh! may such trial be thy last!

8.

This heart, alas! perverted long,
Itself destroy'd might there destroy;
To meet thee in the glittering throng,
Would wake Presumption's hope of joy.

9.

Then to the things whose bliss or woe,
Like mine, is wild and worthless all,
That world resign—such scenes forego,
Where those who feel must surely fall.

10.

Thy youth, thy charms, thy tenderness,
Thy soul from long seclusion pure;
From what even here hath past, may guess
What there thy bosom must endure.

11.

Oh! pardon that imploring tear,
Since not by Virtue shed in vain,
My frenzy drew from eyes so dear;
For me they shall not weep again.

12.

Though long and mournful must it be,
The thought that we no more may meet;
Yet I deserve the stern decree,
And almost deem the sentence sweet.

13.

Still, had I loved thee less, my heart
Had then less sacrificed to thine;
It felt not half so much to part,
As if its guilt had made thee mine.

LINES

INSCRIBED UPON A CUP FORMED FROM A SKULL.

1.

START not—nor deem my spirit fled:
In me behold the only skull,
From which, unlike a living head,
Whatever flows is never dull.

2.

I lived, I loved, I quaff'd, like thee;
I died; let earth my bones resign:
Fill up—thou canst not injure me;
The worm hath fouler lips than thine.

3.

Better to hold the sparkling grape,
Than nurse the earth-worm's slimy brood;
And circle in the goblet's shape
The drink of Gods, than reptile's food.

4.

Where once my wit, perchance, hath shone,
In aid of others' let me shine;
And when, alas! our brains are gone,
What nobler substitute than wine!

5.

Quaff while thou canst—another race,
When thou and thine like me are sped,
May rescue thee from earth's embrace,
And rhyme and revel with the dead.

6.

Why not? since through life's little day
Our heads such sad effects produce;
Redeem'd from worms and wasting clay,
This chance is theirs, to be of use.

Newstead Abbey, 1808.

ON THE DEATH OF SIR PETER PARKER, BART.

1.

THERE is a tear for all that die,
A mourner o'er the humblest grave;
But nations swell the funeral cry,
And Triumph weeps above the brave.

2.

For them is Sorrow's purest sigh
O'er Ocean's heaving bosom sent:
In vain their bones unburied lie,
All earth becomes their monument!

3.

A tomb is theirs on every page,
An epitaph on every tongue.
The present hours, the future age,
For them bewail, to them belong.

4.

For them the voice of festal mirth
Grows hush'd, *their name* the only sound;
While deep Remembrance pours to Worth
The goblet's tributary round.

5.

A theme to crowds that knew them not,
Lamented by admiring foes,
Who would not share their glorious lot?
Who would not die the death they chose?

6.

And, gallant Parker! thus enshrined
Thy life, thy fall, thy fame shall be;
And early valour, glowing, find
A model in thy memory.

7.

But there are breasts that bleed with thee
In woe, that glory cannot quell;
And shuddering hear of victory,
Where one so dear, so dauntless, fell.

8.

Where shall they turn to mourn thee less?
When cease to hear thy cherish'd name?
Time cannot teach forgetfulness,
While Grief's full heart is fed by Fame.

9.

Alas! for them, though not for thee,
They cannot choose but weep the more;
Deep for the dead the grief must be,
Who ne'er gave cause to mourn before.

TO A LADY WEEPING.

1.

WEEP, daughter of a royal line,
A Sire's disgrace, a realm's decay;
Ah, happy! if each tear of thine
Could wash a father's fault away!

2.

Weep—for thy tears are Virtue's tears—
Auspicious to these suffering isles;
And be each drop in future years
Repaid thee by thy people's smiles!

March, 1812.

FROM THE TURKISH.

1.

THE chain I gave was fair to view,
The lute I added sweet in sound,
The heart that offer'd both was true,
And ill deserved the fate it found.

2.

These gifts were charm'd by secret spell
Thy truth in absence to divine;
And they have done their duty well,
Alas! they could not teach thee thine.

3.

That chain was firm in every link,
But not to bear a stranger's touch;
That lute was sweet—till thou could'st think
In other hands its notes were such.

4.

Let him, who from thy neck unbound
The chain which shiver'd in his grasp,
Who saw that lute refuse to sound,
Restring the chords, renew the clasp.

5.

When thou wert changed, they alter'd too;
The chain is broke, the music mute;
'Tis past—to them and thee adieu—
False heart, frail chain, and silent lute.

SONNET.

TO GENEVRA.

THINE eyes blue tenderness, thy long fair hair,
And the wan lustre of thy features—caught
From contemplation—where serenely wrought,
Seems Sorrow's softness charm'd from its despair—
Have thrown such speaking sadness in thine air,
That—but I know thy blessed bosom fraught
With mines of unalloy'd and stainless thought—
I should have deem'd thee doom'd to earthly care.
With such an aspect, by his colours blent,
When from his beauty-breathing pencil born,
(Except that *thou* hast nothing to repent)
The Magdalen of Guido saw the morn—
Such seem'st thou—but how much more excellent!
With nought Remorse can claim—nor Virtue scorn.

SONNET.

TO GENEVRA.

THY cheek is pale with thought, but not from woe,
And yet so lovely, that if Mirth could flush
Its rose of whiteness with the brightest blush,
My heart would wish away that ruder glow:—
And dazzle not thy deep-blue eyes—but oh!
While gazing on them sterner eyes will gush,
And into mine my mother's weakness rush,
Soft as the last drops round heaven's airy bow.
For, through thy long dark lashes low depending,
The soul of melancholy Gentleness
Gleams like a seraph from the sky descending,
Above all pain, yet pitying all distress;
At once such majesty with sweetness blending,
I worship more, but cannot love thee less.

INSCRIPTION

ON THE MONUMENT OF A NEWFOUNDLAND DOG.

When some proud son of man returns to earth,
Unknown to glory, but upheld by birth,
The sculptor's art exhausts the pomp of woe,
And storied urns record who rests below;
When all is done, upon the tomb is seen,
Not what he was, but what he should have been:
But the poor dog, in life the firmest friend,
The first to welcome, foremost to defend,
Whose honest heart is still his master's own,
Who labours, fights, lives, breathes for him alone,
Unhonour'd falls, unnoticed all his worth,
Denied in heaven the soul he held on earth:
While man, vain insect! hopes to be forgiven,
And claims himself a sole exclusive heaven.
Oh man! thou feeble tenant of an hour,
Debased by slavery, or corrupt by power,
Who knows thee well must quit thee with disgust,
Degraded mass of animated dust!

Thy love is lust, thy friendship all a cheat,
Thy smiles hypocrisy, thy words deceit!
By nature vile, ennobled but by name,
Each kindred brute might bid thee blush for shame.
Ye! who perchance behold this simple urn,
Pass on—it honours none you wish to mourn:
To mark a friend's remains these stones arise,
I never knew but one, and here he lies.

Newstead Abbey, Oct. 30, 1808.

FAREWELL.

FAREWELL! if ever fondest prayer
For other's weal avail'd on high,
Mine will not all be lost in air,
But waft thy name beyond the sky.
'Twere vain to speak, to weep, to sigh:
Oh! more than tears of blood can tell,
When wrung from guilt's expiring eye,
Are in that word—Farewell!—Farewell!

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry;
But in my breast, and in my brain,
Awake the pangs that pass not by,
The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.
My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,
Though grief and passion there rebel;
I only know we loved in vain—
I only feel—Farewell!—Farewell!

1.

Bright be the place of thy soul!
No lovelier spirit than thine
E'er burst from its mortal control,
In the orbs of the blessed to shine.
On earth thou wert all but divine,
As thy soul shall immortally be;
And our sorrow may cease to repine,
When we know that thy God is with thee.

2.

Light be the turf of thy tomb!
May its verdure like emeralds be:
There should not be the shadow of gloom,
In aught that reminds us of thee.
Young flowers and an evergreen tree
May spring from the spot of thy rest:
But nor cypress nor yew let us see;
For why should we mourn for the blest?

1.

When we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

2.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow—
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

3.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well:—
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

4.

In secret we met—
In silence I grieve,
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee?—
With silence and tears.

1808.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC*.

" O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
" Ducentium ortus ex animo: quater
" Felix! in imo qui scatentem
" Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit."
Gray's Poemata.

1.

THERE's not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay;
'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which fades so fast,
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be past.

2.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of happiness,
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess:
The magnet of their course is gone, or only points in vain
The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall never stretch again.

* These Verses were given by Lord Byron to Mr. Power, Strand, who has published them, with very beautiful music by Sir John Stevenson.

3.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself comes down;
It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not dream its own;
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our tears,
And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where the ice appears.

4.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth distract the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more their former hope of rest;
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret wreath,
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and gray beneath.

5.

Oh could I feel as I have felt,—or be what I have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept, o'er many a vanish'd scene:
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish though they be,
So midst the wither'd waste of life, those tears would flow to me.

1815.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming,

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep;
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep:
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

FARE THEE WELL.

" Alas! they had been friends in Youth;
" But whispering tongues can poison truth;
" And constancy lives in realms above:
" And Life is thorny; and youth is vain:
" And to be wroth with one we love,
" Doth work like madness in the brain:
* * * * * * *
" But never either found another
" To free the hollow heart from paining—
" They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
" Like cliffs, which had been rent asunder;
" A dreary sea now flows between,
" But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder
" Shall wholly do away, I ween,
" The marks of that which once hath been."

Coleridge's Christabel.

FARE thee well! and if for ever,
Still for ever, fare *thee well:*
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.
Would that breast were bared before thee
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
Which thou ne'er canst know again:

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
Every inmost thought could show!
Then thou wouldst at last discover
'Twas not well to spurn it so.
Though the world for this commend thee—
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe—
Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound?
Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not;
Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away:
Still thine own its life retaineth—
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;
And the undying thought which paineth
Is—that we no more may meet.
These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead;
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widow'd bed.

And when thou wouldst solace gather,
When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say "Father!"
Though his care she must forego?
When her little hands shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is prest,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
Think of him thy love had bless'd!
Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou never more may'st see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.
All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know;
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
Wither, yet with *thee* they go.
Every feeling hath been shaken;
Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee—by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now:
But 'tis done—all words are idle—
Words from me are vainer still;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
Force their way without the will.—

Fare thee well!—thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Sear'd in heart, and lone, and blighted—
More than this I scarce can die.

A SKETCH.

"Honest—Honest Iago!
"If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee."
Shakspeare.

Born in the garret, in the kitchen bred,
Promoted thence to deck her mistress' head;
Next—for some gracious service unexprest,
And from its wages only to be guess'd—
Raised from the toilet to the table,—where
Her wondering betters wait behind her chair.
With eye unmoved, and forehead unabash'd,
She dines from off the plate she lately wash'd.
Quick with the tale, and ready with the lie—
The genial confidante, and general spy—
Who could, ye gods! her next employment guess—
An only infant's earliest governess!
She taught the child to read, and taught so well,
That she herself, by teaching, learn'd to spell.
An adept next in penmanship she grows,
As many a nameless slander deftly shows:
What she had made the pupil of her art,
None know—but that high Soul secured the heart,

And panted for the truth it could not hear,
With longing breast and undeluded ear.
Foil'd was perversion by that youthful mind,
Which Flattery fool'd not—Baseness could not blind,
Deceit infect not—near Contagion soil—
Indulgence weaken—nor Example spoil—
Nor master'd Science tempt her to look down
On humbler talents with a pitying frown—
Nor Genius swell—nor Beauty render vain—
Nor Envy ruffle to retaliate pain—
Nor Fortune change—Pride raise—nor Passion bow,
Nor Virtue teach austerity—till now.
Serenely purest of her sex that live,
But wanting one sweet weakness—to forgive,
Too shock'd at faults her soul can never know,
She deems that all could be like her below:
Foe to all vice, yet hardly Virtue's friend,
For Virtue pardons those she would amend.

But to the theme:—now laid aside too long
The baleful burthen of this honest song—
Though all her former functions are no more,
She rules the circle which she served before.
If mothers—none know why—before her quake;
If daughters dread her for the mothers' sake;

If early habits—those false links, which bind
At times the loftiest to the meanest mind—
Have given her power too deeply to instil
The angry essence of her deadly will;
If like a snake she steal within your walls,
Till the black slime betray her as she crawls;
If like a viper to the heart she wind,
And leave the venom there she did not find;
What marvel that this hag of hatred works
Eternal evil latent as she lurks,
To make a Pandemonium where she dwells,
And reign the Hecate of domestic hells?
Skill'd by a touch to deepen scandal's tints
With all the kind mendacity of hints
While mingling truth with falsehood—sneers with smiles—
A thread of candour with a web of wiles;
A plain blunt show of briefly-spoken seeming,
To hide her bloodless heart's soul-harden'd scheming;
A lip of lies—a face form'd to conceal;
And, without feeling, mock at all who feel:
With a vile mask the Gorgon would disown;
A cheek of parchment—and an eye of stone.
Mark, how the channels of her yellow blood
Ooze to her skin, and stagnate there to mud,

Cased like the centipede in saffron mail,
Or darker greenness of the scorpion's scale—
(For drawn from reptiles only may we trace
Congenial colours in that soul or face)—
Look on her features! and behold her mind
As in a mirror of itself defined:
Look on the picture! deem it not o'ercharged—
There is no trait which might not be enlarged:
Yet true to "Nature's journeymen," who made
This monster when their mistress left off trade,—
This female dog-star of her little sky,
Where all beneath her influence droop or die.

Oh! wretch without a tear—without a thought,
Save joy above the ruin thou hast wrought—
The time shall come, nor long remote, when thou
Shalt feel far more than thou inflictest now;
Feel for thy vile self-loving self in vain,
And turn thee howling in unpitied pain.
May the strong curse of crush'd affections light
Back on thy bosom with reflected blight!
And make thee in thy leprosy of mind
As loathsome to thyself as to mankind!
Till all thy self-thoughts curdle into hate,
Black—as thy will for others would create:

Till thy hard heart be calcined into dust,
And thy soul welter in its hideous crust.
Oh, may thy grave be sleepless as the bed,—
The widow'd couch of fire, that thou hast spread!
Then, when thou fain wouldst weary Heaven with prayer,
Look on thine earthly victims—and despair!
Down to the dust!—and, as thou rott'st away,
Even worms shall perish on thy poisonous clay.
But for the love I bore, and still must bear,
To her thy malice from all ties would tear—
Thy name—thy human name—to every eye
The climax of all scorn should hang on high,
Exalted o'er thy less abhorr'd compeers—
And festering in the infamy of years.

TO ———.

1.

When all around grew drear and dark,
And reason half withheld her ray—
And hope but shed a dying spark
Which more misled my lonely way;

2.

In that deep midnight of the mind,
And that internal strife of heart,
When dreading to be deem'd too kind,
The weak despair—the cold depart;

3.

When fortune changed—and love fled far,
And hatred's shafts flew thick and fast,
Thou wert the solitary star
Which rose and set not to the last.

4.

Oh! blest be thine unbroken light!
That watch'd me as a seraph's eye,
And stood between me and the night,
For ever shining sweetly nigh.

5.

And when the cloud upon us came,
Which strove to blacken o'er thy ray—
Then purer spread its gentle flame,
And dash'd the darkness all away.

6.

Still may thy spirit dwell on mine,
And teach it what to brave or brook—
There's more in one soft word of thine,
Than in the world's defied rebuke.

7.

Thou stood'st, as stands a lovely tree,
That still unbroke, though gently bent,
Still waves with fond fidelity
Its boughs above a monument.

8.

The winds might rend—the skies might pour,
But there thou wert—and still wouldst be
Devoted in the stormiest hour
To shed thy weeping leaves o'er me.

9.

But thou and thine shall know no blight,
Whatever fate on me may fall;
For heaven in sunshine will requite
The kind—and thee the most of all.

10.

Then let the ties of baffled love
Be broken—thine will never break;
Thy heart can feel—but will not move;
Thy soul, though soft, will never shake.

11.

And these, when all was lost beside,
Were found and still are fix'd in thee—
And bearing still a breast so tried,
Earth is no desert—ev'n to me.

ODE.

[*FROM THE FRENCH.*]

I.

We do not curse thee, Waterloo!
Though Freedom's blood thy plain bedew;
There 'twas shed, but is not sunk—
Rising from each gory trunk,
Like the Water-spout from ocean,
With a strong and growing motion—
It soars, and mingles in the air,
With that of lost Labedoyere—
With that of him whose honour'd grave
Contains the "bravest of the brave."
A crimson cloud it spreads and glows,
But shall return to whence it rose;
When 'tis full 'twill burst asunder—
Never yet was heard such thunder
As then shall shake the world with wonder—

Never yet was seen such lightning,
As o'er heaven shall then be bright'ning!
Like the Wormwood Star foretold
By the sainted Seer of old,
Show'ring down a fiery flood,
Turning rivers into blood. (6)

II.

The Chief has fallen, but not by you,
Vanquishers of Waterloo!
When the soldier citizen
Sway'd not o'er his fellow men—
Save in deeds that led them on
Where Glory smiled on Freedom's son—
Who, of all the despots banded,
With that youthful chief competed?
Who could boast o'er France defeated,
Till lone Tyranny commanded?
Till, goaded by ambition's sting,
The Hero sunk into the King?
Then he fell;—So perish all,
Who would men by man enthral!

III.

And thou too of the snow-white plume!
Whose realm refused thee ev'n a tomb; (7)
Better hadst thou still been leading
France o'er hosts of hirelings bleeding,
Than sold thyself to death and shame
For a meanly royal name;
Such as he of Naples wears,
Who thy blood-bought title bears.
Little didst thou deem, when dashing
On thy war-horse through the ranks,
Like a stream which burst its banks,
While helmets cleft, and sabres clashing,
Shone and shiver'd fast around thee—
Of the fate at last which found thee:
Was that haughty plume laid low
By a slave's dishonest blow?
Once—as the Moon sways o'er the tide,
It roll'd in air, the warrior's guide;
Through the smoke-created night
Of the black and sulphurous fight,
The soldier raised his seeking eye
To catch that crest's ascendancy,—

And, as it onward rolling rose,
So moved his heart upon our foes.
There, where death's brief pang was quickest,
And the battle's wreck lay thickest,
Strew'd beneath the advancing banner
Of the eagle's burning crest—
(There with thunder-clouds to fan her,
Who could then her wing arrest—
Victory beaming from her breast?)
While the broken line enlarging
Fell, or fled along the plain;
There be sure was MURAT charging!
There he ne'er shall charge again!

IV.

O'er glories gone the invaders march,
Weeps Triumph o'er each levell'd arch—
But let Freedom rejoice,
With her heart in her voice;
But, her hand on her sword,
Doubly shall she be adored;
France hath twice too well been taught
The "moral lesson" dearly bought—

Her Safety sits not on a throne,
With CAPET or NAPOLEON!
But in equal rights and laws,
Hearts and hands in one great cause—
Freedom, such as God hath given
Unto all beneath his heaven,
With their breath, and from their birth,
Though Guilt would sweep it from the earth;
With a fierce and lavish hand
Scattering nations' wealth like sand;
Pouring nations' blood like water,
In imperial seas of slaughter!

V.

But the heart and the mind,
And the voice of mankind,
Shall arise in communion—
And who shall resist that proud union?
The time is past when swords subdued—
Man may die—the soul's renew'd:
Even in this low world of care
Freedom ne'er shall want an heir;
Millions breathe but to inherit
Her for ever bounding spirit—

When once more her hosts assemble,
Tyrants shall believe and tremble—
Smile they at this idle threat?
Crimson tears will follow yet.

[*FROM THE FRENCH.*]

"All wept, but particularly Savary, and a Polish officer who had been exalted from the ranks by Bonaparte. He clung to his master's knees; wrote a letter to Lord Keith, entreating permission to accompany him, even in the most menial capacity, which could not be admitted."

1.

MUST thou go, my glorious Chief,
Sever'd from thy faithful few?
Who can tell thy warrior's grief,
Maddening o'er that long adieu?
Woman's love, and friendship's zeal,
Dear as both have been to me—
What are they to all I feel,
With a soldier's faith for thee?

2.

Idol of the soldier's soul!
First in fight, but mightiest now:
Many could a world control;
Thee alone no doom can bow.

By thy side for years I dared
Death; and envied those who fell,
When their dying shout was heard,
Blessing him they served so well. (8)

3.

Would that I were cold with those,
Since this hour I live to see;
When the doubts of coward foes
Scarce dare trust a man with thee,
Dreading each should set thee free.
Oh! although in dungeons pent,
All their chains were light to me,
Gazing on thy soul unbent.

4.

Would the sycophants of him
Now so deaf to duty's prayer,
Were his borrow'd glories dim,
In his native darkness share?
Were that world this hour his own,
All thou calmly dost resign,
Could he purchase with that throne
Hearts like those which still are thine?

5.

My chief, my king, my friend, adieu!
Never did I droop before;
Never to my sovereign sue,
As his foes I now implore:
All I ask is to divide
Every peril he must brave;
Sharing by the hero's side
His fall, his exile, and his grave.

ON THE STAR OF "THE LEGION OF HONOUR."

[*FROM THE FRENCH.*]

1.

STAR of the brave!—whose beam hath shed
Such glory o'er the quick and dead—
Thou radiant and adored deceit!
Which millions rush'd in arms to greet,—
Wild meteor of immortal birth!
Why rise in Heaven to set on Earth?

2.

Souls of slain heroes form'd thy rays;
Eternity flash'd through thy blaze;
The music of thy martial sphere
Was fame on high and honour here;
And thy light broke on human eyes,
Like a Volcano of the skies.

3.

Like lava roll'd thy stream of blood,
And swept down empires with its flood;
Earth rock'd beneath thee to her base,
As thou didst lighten through all space;
And the shorn Sun grew dim in air,
And set while thou wert dwelling there.

4.

Before thee rose, and with thee grew,
A rainbow of the loveliest hue
Of three bright colours, [9] each divine,
And fit for that celestial sign;
For Freedom's hand had blended them,
Like tints in an immortal gem.

5.

One tint was of the sunbeam's dyes;
One, the blue depth of Seraph's eyes;
One, the pure Spirit's veil of white
Had robed in radiance of its light:
The three so mingled did beseem
The texture of a heavenly dream.

6.

Star of the brave! thy ray is pale,
And darkness must again prevail!
But, oh thou Rainbow of the free!
Our tears and blood must flow for thee.
When thy bright promise fades away,
Our life is but a load of clay.

7.

And Freedom hallows with her tread
The silent cities of the dead;
For beautiful in death are they
Who proudly fall in her array;
And soon, oh Goddess! may we be
For evermore with them or thee!

NAPOLEON'S FAREWELL.

[*FROM THE FRENCH.*]

1.

FAREWELL to the Land, where the gloom of my Glory
Arose and o'ershadow'd the earth with her name—
She abandons me now,—but the page of her story,
The brightest or blackest, is fill'd with my fame.
I have warr'd with a world which vanquish'd me only
When the meteor of Conquest allured me too far;
I have coped with the nations which dread me thus lonely,
The last single Captive to millions in war!

2.

Farewell to thee, France!—when thy diadem crown'd me,
I made thee the gem and the wonder of earth,—
But thy weakness decrees I should leave as I found thee,
Decay'd in thy glory, and sunk in thy worth.
Oh! for the veteran hearts that were wasted
In strife with the storm, when their battles were won—
Then the Eagle, whose gaze in that moment was blasted,
Had still soar'd with eyes fix'd on victory's sun!

3.

Farewell to thee, France!—but when Liberty rallies
Once more in thy regions, remember me then—
The violet still grows in the depth of thy valleys;
Though wither'd, thy tears will unfold it again—
Yet, yet, I may baffle the hosts that surround us,
And yet may thy heart leap awake to my voice—
There are links which must break in the chain that has bound us,
Then turn thee and call on the Chief of thy choice!

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF OF "THE PLEASURES OF MEMORY."

ABSENT or present, still to thee,
My friend, what magic spells belong!
As all can tell, who share, like me,
In turn thy converse, and thy song.
But when the dreaded hour shall come
By Friendship ever deem'd too nigh,
And "MEMORY" o'er her Druid's tomb
Shall weep that aught of thee can die,
How fondly will She then repay
Thy homage offer'd at her shrine,
And blend, while Ages roll away,
Her name immortally with *thine!*

April 19, 1812.

SONNET.

Rousseau—Voltaire—our Gibbon—and de Staël—
(10) Leman! these names are worthy of thy shore,
Thy shore of names like these; wert thou no more,
Their memory thy remembrance would recall:
To them thy banks were lovely as to all,
But they have made them lovelier, for the lore
Of mighty minds doth hallow in the core
Of human hearts the ruin of a wall
Where dwelt the wise and wond'rous; but by *thee*
How much more, Lake of Beauty! do we feel,
In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,
The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,
Which of the heirs of immortality
Is proud, and makes the breath of glory real!

STANZAS TO ——.

1.

THOUGH the day of my destiny's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
It shrunk not to share it with me,
And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in *thee*.

2.

Then when nature around me is smiling,
The last smile which answers to mine,
I do not believe it beguiling
Because it reminds me of thine;
And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their billows excite an emotion
It is that they bear me from *thee*.

3.

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd
To pain—it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me:
They may crush, but they shall not contemn—
They may torture, but shall not subdue me—
'Tis of *thee* that I think—not of them.

4.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slander'd, thou never could'st shake,—
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,
Nor, mute, that the world might belie.

5.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many with one—

If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
'Twas folly not sooner to shun:
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could foresee,
I have found that, whatever it lost me,
It could not deprive me of *thee*.

6.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd
Deserved to be dearest of all:
In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

DARKNESS.

I HAD a dream, which was not all a dream.
The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the stars
Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air;
Morn came, and went—and came, and brought no day,
And men forgot their passions in the dread
Of this their desolation; and all hearts
Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for light:
And they did live by watchfires—and the thrones,
The palaces of crowned kings—the huts,
The habitations of all things which dwell,
Were burnt for beacons; cities were consumed,
And men were gather'd round their blazing homes
To look once more into each other's face;
Happy were those who dwelt within the eye
Of the volcanos, and their mountain-torch:
A fearful hope was all the world contain'd;
Forests were set on fire—but hour by hour
They fell and faded—and the crackling trunks

Extinguish'd with a crash—and all was black.
The brows of men by the despairing light
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
The flashes fell upon them; some lay down
And hid their eyes and wept; and some did rest
Their chins upon their clenched hands, and smiled;
And others hurried to and fro, and fed
Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd up
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,
The pall of a past world; and then again
With curses cast them down upon the dust,
And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd: the wild birds shriek'd,
And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,
And flap their useless wings; the wildest brutes
Came tame and tremulous; and vipers crawl'd
And twined themselves among the multitude,
Hissing, but stingless—they were slain for food:
And War, which for a moment was no more,
Did glut himself again;—a meal was bought
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart
Gorging himself in gloom: no love was left;
All earth was but one thought—and that was death,
Immediate and inglorious; and the pang
Of famine fed upon all entrails—men

Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh;
The meagre by the meagre were devour'd,
Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save one,
And he was faithful to a corse, and kept
The birds and beasts and famish'd men at bay,
Till hunger clung them, or the dropping dead
Lured their lank jaws; himself sought out no food,
But with a piteous and perpetual moan,
And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand
Which answer'd not with a caress—he died.
The crowd was famish'd by degrees; but two
Of an enormous city did survive,
And they were enemies; they met beside
The dying embers of an altar-place
Where had been heap'd a mass of holy things
For an unholy usage; they raked up,
And shivering scraped with their cold skeleton hands
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath
Blew for a little life, and made a flame
Which was a mockery; then they lifted up
Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld
Each other's aspects—saw, and shriek'd, and died—
Even of their mutual hideousness they died,
Unknowing who he was upon whose brow

Famine had written Fiend. The world was void,
The populous and the powerful was a lump,
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless—
A lump of death—a chaos of hard clay.
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirr'd within their silent depths;
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piecemeal; as they dropp'd
They slept on the abyss without a surge—
The waves were dead; the tides were in their grave,
The moon their mistress had expired before;
The winds were wither'd in the stagnant air,
And the clouds perish'd; Darkness had no need
Of aid from them—She was the universe.

CHURCHILL'S GRAVE,

A FACT LITERALLY RENDERED.

I STOOD beside the grave of him who blazed
The comet of a season, and I saw
The humblest of all sepulchres, and gazed
With not the less of sorrow and of awe
On that neglected turf and quiet stone,
With name no clearer than the names unknown,
Which lay unread around it; and I ask'd
The Gardener of that ground, why it might be
That for this plant strangers his memory task'd
Through the thick deaths of half a century;
And thus he answer'd—"Well, I do not know
"Why frequent travellers turn to pilgrims so;
"He died before my day of Sextonship,
"And I had not the digging of this grave."
And is this all? I thought,—and do we rip
The veil of Immortality? and crave

I know not what of honour and of light
Through unborn ages, to endure this blight?
So soon and so successless? As I said,
The Architect of all on which we tread,
For Earth is but a tombstone, did essay
To extricate remembrance from the clay,
Whose minglings might confuse a Newton's thought
Were it not that all life must end in one,
Of which we are but dreamers;—as he caught
As 'twere the twilight of a former Sun,
Thus spoke he,—" I believe the man of whom
" You wot, who lies in this selected tomb,
" Was a most famous writer in his day,
" And therefore travellers step from out their way
" To pay him honour,—and myself whate'er
" Your honour pleases,"—then most pleased I shook
From out my pocket's avaricious nook
Some certain coins of silver, which as 'twere
Perforce I gave this man, though I could spare
So much but inconveniently;—Ye smile,
I see ye, ye profane ones! all the while,
Because my homely phrase the truth would tell.
You are the fools, not I—for I did dwell

With a deep thought, and with a soften'd eye,
On that Old Sexton's natural homily,
In which there was Obscurity and Fame,
The Glory and the Nothing of a Name.

THE DREAM.

I.

Our life is twofold; Sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence: Sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality,
And dreams in their development have breath,
And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils,
They do divide our being; they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time,
And look like heralds of eternity;
They pass like spirits of the past,—they speak
Like sibyls of the future; they have power—
The tyranny of pleasure and of pain;
They make us what we were not—what they will,
And shake us with the vision that's gone by,
The dread of vanish'd shadows—Are they so?
Is not the past all shadow? What are they?
Creations of the mind?—The mind can make

Substance, and people planets of its own
With beings brighter than have been, and give
A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh.
I would recall a vision which I dream'd
Perchance in sleep—for in itself a thought,
A slumbering thought, is capable of years,
And curdles a long life into one hour.

II.

I saw two beings in the hues of youth
Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,
Green and of mild declivity, the last
As 'twere the cape of a long ridge of such,
Save that there was no sea to lave its base,
But a most living landscape, and the wave
Of woods and cornfields, and the abodes of men
Scatter'd at intervals, and wreathing smoke
Arising from such rustic roofs;—the hill
Was crown'd with a peculiar diadem
Of trees, in circular array, so fix'd,
Not by the sport of nature, but of man:
These two, a maiden and a youth, were there
Gazing—the one on all that was beneath
Fair as herself—but the boy gazed on her;

And both were young, and one was beautiful:
And both were young—yet not alike in youth.
As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge
The maid was on the eve of womanhood;
The boy had fewer summers, but his heart
Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,
And that was shining on him; he had look'd
Upon it till it could not pass away;
He had no breath, no being, but in hers;
She was his voice; he did not speak to her,
But trembled on her words; she was his sight,
For his eye follow'd hers, and saw with hers,
Which colour'd all his objects:—he had ceased
To live within himself; she was his life,
The ocean to the river of his thoughts,
Which terminated all: upon a tone,
A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow,
And his cheek change tempestuously—his heart
Unknowing of its cause of agony.
But she in these fond feelings had no share:
Her sighs were not for him; to her he was
Even as a brother—but no more; 'twas much,
For brotherless she was, save in the name

Her infant friendship had bestow'd on him;
Herself the solitary scion left
Of a time-honour'd race.—It was a name
Which pleased him, and yet pleased him not—and why?
Time taught him a deep answer—when she loved
Another; even *now* she loved another,
And on the summit of that hill she stood
Looking afar if yet her lover's steed
Kept pace with her expectancy, and flew.

III.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
There was an ancient mansion, and before
Its walls there was a steed caparison'd:
Within an antique Oratory stood
The Boy of whom I spake;—he was alone,
And pale, and pacing to and fro; anon
He sate him down, and seized a pen, and traced
Words which I could not guess of; then he lean'd
His bow'd head on his hands, and shook as 'twere
With a convulsion—then arose again,
And with his teeth and quivering hands did tear
What he had written, but he shed no tears.
And he did calm himself, and fix his brow

Into a kind of quiet: as he paused,
The Lady of his love re-enter'd there;
She was serene and smiling then, and yet
She knew she was by him beloved,—she knew,
For quickly comes such knowledge, that his heart
Was darken'd with her shadow, and she saw
That he was wretched, but she saw not all.
He rose, and with a cold and gentle grasp
He took her hand; a moment o'er his face
A tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced, and then it faded, as it came;
He dropp'd the hand he held, and with slow steps
Retired, but not as bidding her adieu,
For they did part with mutual smiles; he pass'd
From out the massy gate of that old Hall,
And mounting on his steed he went his way;
And ne'er repass'd that hoary threshold more.

IV.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Boy was sprung to manhood: in the wilds
Of fiery climes he made himself a home,
And his Soul drank their sunbeams; he was girt
With strange and dusky aspects; he was not

Himself like what he had been; on the sea
And on the shore he was a wanderer;
There was a mass of many images
Crowded like waves upon me, but he was
A part of all; and in the last he lay
Reposing from the noontide sultriness,
Couch'd among fallen columns, in the shade
Of ruin'd walls that had survived the names
Of those who rear'd them; by his sleeping side
Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds
Were fasten'd near a fountain; and a man
Clad in a flowing garb did watch the while,
While many of his tribe slumber'd around:
And they were canopied by the blue sky,
So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,
That God alone was to be seen in Heaven.

V.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Lady of his love was wed with One
Who did not love her better:—in her home,
A thousand leagues from his,—her native home,
She dwelt, begirt with growing Infancy,
Daughters and sons of Beauty,—but behold!

Upon her face there was the tint of grief,
The settled shadow of an inward strife,
And an unquiet drooping of the eye
As if its lid were charged with unshed tears.
What could her grief be?—she had all she loved,
And he who had so loved her was not there
To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,
Or ill-repress'd affliction, her pure thoughts.
What could her grief be?—she had loved him not,
Nor given him cause to deem himself beloved,
Nor could he be a part of that which prey'd
Upon her mind—a spectre of the past.

VI.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.—
The Wanderer was return'd.—I saw him stand
Before an Altar—with a gentle bride;
Her face was fair, but was not that which made
The Starlight of his Boyhood;—as he stood
Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
The selfsame aspect, and the quivering shock
That in the antique Oratory shook
His bosom in its solitude; and then—
As in that hour—a moment o'er his face

The tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced,—and then it faded as it came,
And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
And all things reel'd around him; he could see
Not that which was, nor that which should have been—
But the old mansion, and the accustom'd hall,
And the remember'd chambers, and the place,
The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
All things pertaining to that place and hour,
And her who was his destiny, came back
And thrust themselves between him and the light:
What business had they there at such a time?

VII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream..
The lady of his love;—Oh! she was changed
As by the sickness of the soul; her mind
Had wander'd from its dwelling, and her eyes
They had not their own lustre, but the look
Which is not of the earth; she was become
The queen of a fantastic realm; her thoughts
Were combinations of disjointed things;
And forms impalpable and unperceived

Of others' sight familiar were to hers.
And this the world calls phrensy; but the wise
Have a far deeper madness, and the glance
Of melancholy is a fearful gift;
What is it but the telescope of truth?
Which strips the distance of its phantasies,
And brings life near in utter nakedness,
Making the cold reality too real!

VIII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.—
The Wanderer was alone as heretofore,
The beings which surrounded him were gone,
Or were at war with him; he was a mark
For blight and desolation, compass'd round
With Hatred and Contention; Pain was mix'd
In all which was served up to him, until
Like to the Pontic monarch of old days, (11)
He fed on poisons, and they had no power,
But were a kind of nutriment; he lived
Through that which had been death to many men,
And made him friends of mountains: with the stars
And the quick Spirit of the Universe
He held his dialogues; and they did teach

To him the magic of their mysteries;
To him the book of Night was open'd wide,
And voices from the deep abyss reveal'd
A marvel and a secret—Be it so.

IX.

My dream was past; it had no further change.
It was of a strange order, that the doom
Of these two creatures should be thus traced out
Almost like a reality—the one
To end in madness—both in misery.

PROMETHEUS.

I.

TITAN! to whose immortal eyes
The sufferings of mortality,
Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise;
What was thy pity's recompense?
A silent suffering, and intense;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain,
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of woe,
Which speaks but in its loneliness,
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a listener, nor will sigh
Until its voice is echoless.

II.

Titan! to thee the strife was given
Between the suffering and the will,
Which torture where they cannot kill;
And the inexorable Heaven,
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
The ruling principle of Hate,
Which for its pleasure doth create
The things it may annihilate,
Refused thee even the boon to die:
The wretched gift eternity
Was thine—and thou hast borne it well.
All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack;
The fate thou didst so well foresee,
But would not to appease him tell;
And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
And in his Soul a vain repentance,
And evil dread so ill dissembled
That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

III.

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,
To render with thy precepts less
The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen Man with his own mind;
But baffled as thou wert from high,
Still in thy patient energy,
In the endurance, and repulse
Of thine impenetrable Spirit,
Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse,
A mighty lesson we inherit:
Thou art a symbol and a sign
To Mortals of their fate and force;
Like thee, Man is in part divine,
A troubled stream from a pure source;
And Man in portions can foresee
His own funereal destiny;
His wretchedness, and his resistance,
And his sad unallied existence:
To which his Spirit may oppose
Itself—an equal to all woes,

And a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
Its own concenter'd recompense,
Triumphant where it dares defy,
And making Death a Victory.

[redacted]

ROMANCE MUY DOLOROSO

DEL

SITIO Y TOMA DE ALHAMA.

The effect of the original Ballad (which existed both in Spanish and Arabic) was such that it was forbidden to be sung by the Moors, on pain of death, within Granada.

ROMANCE MUY DOLOROSO

DEL

SITIO Y TOMA DE ALHAMA,

El qual dezia en Aravigo assi.

1.

Passeavase el Rey Moro
Por la ciudad de Granada,
Desde las puertas de Elvira
Hasta las de Bivarambla.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

2.

Cartas le fueron venidas
Que Alhama era ganada.
Las cartas echò en el fuego,
Y al mensagero matava.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

A VERY MOURNFUL BALLAD

ON THE

SIEGE AND CONQUEST OF ALHAMA,

Which, in the Arabic language, is to the following purport.

1.

THE Moorish King rides up and down
Through Granada's royal town;
From Elvira's gates to those
Of Bivarambla on he goes.
Woe is me, Alhama!

2.

Letters to the monarch tell
How Alhama's city fell;
In the fire the scroll he threw,
And the messenger he slew.
Woe is me, Alhama!

3.

Descavalga de una mula,
Y en un cavallo cavalga.
Por el Zacatin arriba
Subido se avia al Alhambra.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

4.

Como en el Alhambra estuvo,
Al mismo punto mandava
Que se toquen las trompetas
Con añafiles de plata.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

5.

Y que atambores de guerra
Apriessa toquen alarma;
Por que lo oygan sus Moros,
Los de la Vega y Granada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

3.

He quits his mule, and mounts his horse,
And through the street directs his course;
Through the street of Zacatin
To the Alhambra spurring in.
Woe is me, Alhama!

4.

When the Alhambra walls he gain'd,
On the moment he ordain'd
That the trumpet straight should sound
With the silver clarion round.
Woe is me, Alhama!

5.

And when the hollow drums of war
Beat the loud alarm afar,
That the Moors of town and plain
Might answer to the martial strain,
Woe is me, Alhama!

6.

Los Moros que el son oyeron,
Que al sangriento Marte llama,
Uno a uno, y dos a dos,
Un gran esquadron formavan.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

7.

Alli hablò un Moro viejo;
Desta manera hablava:—
Para que nos llamas, Rey?
Para que es este llamada?
Ay de mi, Alhama!

8.

Aveys de saber, amigos,
Una nueva desdichada:
Que Cristianos, con braveza,
Ya nos han tomado Alhama.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

6.

Then the Moors by this aware
That bloody Mars recalled them there,
One by one, and two by two,
To a mighty squadron grew.
Woe is me, Alhama!

7.

Out then spake an aged Moor
In these words the king before,
" Wherefore call on us, oh king?
" What may mean this gathering?"
Woe is me, Alhama!

8.

" Friends! ye have, alas! to know
" Of a most disastrous blow,
" That the Christians, stern and bold,
" Have obtain'd Alhama's hold."
Woe is me, Alhama!

9.

Alli hablò un viejo Alfaqui,
De barba crecida y cana:—
Bien se te emplea, buen Rey,
Buen Rey; bien se te empleava.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

10.

Mataste los Bencerrages,
Que era la flor de Granada;
Cogiste los tornadizos
De Cordova la nombrada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

11.

Por esso mereces, Rey
Una pena bien doblada;
Que te pierdas tu y el reyno,
Y que se pierda Granada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

9.

Out then spake old Alfaqui,
With his beard so white to see,
" Good King! thou art justly served,
" Good King! this thou hast deserved
Woe is me, Alhama!

10.

" By thee were slain, in evil hour,
" The Abencerrage, Granada's flower;
" And strangers were received by thee
" Of Cordova the Chivalry.
Woe is me, Alhama!

11.

" And for this, oh King! is sent
" On thee a double chastisement,
" Thee and thine, thy crown and realm,
" One last wreck shall overwhelm.
Woe is me, Alhama!

12.

Si no se respetan leyes,
Es ley que todo se pierda;
Y que se pierda Granada,
Y que te pierdas en ella.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

13.

Fuego por los ojos vierte,
El Rey que esto oyera.
Y como el otro de leyes
De leyes tambien hablava.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

14.

Sabe un Rey que no ay leyes
De darle a Reyes disgusto.—
Esso dize el Rey Moro
Relinchando de colera.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

12.

" He who holds no laws in awe,
" He must perish by the law;
" And Granada must be won,
" And thyself with her undone."
Woe is me, Alhama!

13.

Fire flash'd from out the old Moor's eyes,
The Monarch's wrath began to rise,
Because he answer'd, and because
He spake exceeding well of laws.
Woe is me, Alhama!

14.

" There is no law to say such things
" As may disgust the ear of kings:"—
Thus, snorting with his choler, said
The Moorish King, and doom'd him dead.
Woe is me, Alhama!

15.

Moro Alfaqui, Moro Alfaqui,
El de la vellida barba,
El Rey te manda prender,
Por la perdida de Alhama.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

16.

Y cortarte la cabeza,
Y ponerla en el Alhambra,
Por que a ti castigo sea,
Y otros tiemblen en miralla.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

17.

Cavalleros, hombres buenos,
Dezid de mi parte al Rey,
Al Rey Moro de Granada,
Como no le devo nada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

15.

Moor Alfaqui! Moor Alfaqui!
Though thy beard so hoary be,
The King hath sent to have thee seized,
For Alhama's loss displeased,
Woe is me, Alhama!

16.

And to fix thy head upon
High Alhambra's loftiest stone;
That this for thee should be the law,
And others tremble when they saw.
Woe is me, Alhama!

17.

" Cavalier! and man of worth!
" Let these words of mine go forth;
" Let the Moorish Monarch know,
" That to him I nothing owe:
Woe is me, Alhama!

18.

De averse Alhama perdido
A mi me pesa en el alma.
Que si el Rey perdiò su tierra,
Otro mucho mas perdiera.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

19.

Perdieran hijos padres,
Y casados las casadas:
Las cosas que mas amara
Perdiò l' un y el otro fama.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

20.

Perdi una hija donzella
Que era la flor d' esta tierra,
Cien doblas dava por ella,
No me las estimo en nada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

18.

" But on my soul Alhama weighs,
" And on my inmost spirit preys;
" And if the King his land hath lost,
" Yet others may have lost the most.
Woe is me, Alhama!

19.

" Sires have lost their children, wives
" Their lords, and valiant men their lives;
" One what best his love might claim
" Hath lost, another wealth, or fame.
Woe is me, Alhama!

20.

" I lost a damsel in that hour,
" Of all the land the loveliest flower;
" Doubloons a hundred I would pay,
" And think her ransom cheap that day."
Woe is me, Alhama!

21.

Diziendo assi al hacen Alfaqui,
Le cortaron la cabeça,
Y la elevan al Alhambra,
Assi come el Rey lo manda.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

22.

Hombres, niños y mugeres,
Lloran tan grande perdida.
Lloravan todas las damas
Quantas en Granada avia.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

23.

Por las calles y ventanas
Mucho luto parecia;
Llora el Rey como fembra,
Qu' es mucho lo que perdia.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

21.

And as these things the old Moor said,
They sever'd from the trunk his head;
And to the Alhambra's wall with speed
'Twas carried, as the King decreed.
Woe is me, Alhama!

22.

And men and infants therein weep
Their loss, so heavy and so deep;
Granada's ladies, all she rears
Within her walls, burst into tears.
Woe is me, Alhama!

23.

And from the windows o'er the walls
The sable web of mourning falls;
The King weeps as a woman o'er
His loss, for it is much and sore.
Woe is me, Alhama!

SONETTO DI VITTORELLI.

PER MONACA.

Sonetto composto in nome di un genitore, a cui era morta poco innanzi una figlia appena maritata; è diretto al genitore della sacra sposa.

Di due vaghe donzelle, oneste, accorte
Lieti e miseri padri il ciel ne feo,
Il ciel, che degne di più nobil sorte
L' una e l' altra veggendo, ambo chiedeo.
La mia fu tolta da veloce morte
A le fumanti tede d' imeneo:
La tua, Francesco, in sugellate porte
Eterna prigioniera or si rendeo.
Ma tu almeno potrai de la gelosa
Irremeabil soglia, ove s' asconde,
La sua tenera udir voce pietosa.
Io verso un fiume d' amarissim' onda,
Corro a quel marmo, in cui la figlia or posa,
Batto, e ribatto, ma nessun risponde.

TRANSLATION FROM VITTORELLI.

ON A NUN.

Sonnet composed in the name of a father whose daughter had recently died shortly after her marriage; and addressed to the father of her who had lately taken the veil.

Of two fair virgins, modest, though admired,
Heaven made us happy; and now, wretched sires,
Heaven for a nobler doom their worth desires,
And gazing upon *either*, *both* required.
Mine, while the torch of Hymen newly fired
Becomes extinguish'd, soon—too soon—expires:
But thine, within the closing grate retired,
Eternal captive, to her God aspires.
But *thou* at least from out the jealous door,
Which shuts between your never-meeting eyes,
May'st hear her sweet and pious voice once more:
I to the marble, where *my daughter* lies,
Rush,—the swoln flood of bitterness I pour,
And knock, and knock, and knock—but none replies.

ODE.

I.

Oh Venice! Venice! when thy marble walls
Are level with the waters, there shall be
A cry of nations o'er thy sunken halls,
A loud lament along the sweeping sea!
If I, a northern wanderer, weep for thee,
What should thy sons do?—any thing but weep:
And yet they only murmur in their sleep.
In contrast with their fathers—as the slime,
The dull green ooze of the receding deep,
Is with the dashing of the spring-tide foam,
That drives the sailor shipless to his home,
Are they to those that were; and thus they creep,
Crouching and crab-like, through their sapping streets.
Oh! agony—that centuries should reap
No mellower harvest! Thirteen hundred years
Of wealth and glory turn'd to dust and tears;
And every monument the stranger meets,
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets;

And even the Lion all subdued appears,
And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum,
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats
The echo of thy tyrant's voice along
The soft waves, once all musical to song,
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the throng
Of gondolas—and to the busy hum
Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful deeds
Were but the overbeating of the heart,
And flow of too much happiness, which needs
The aid of age to turn its course apart
From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood
Of sweet sensations, battling with the blood.
But these are better than the gloomy errors,
The weeds of nations in their last decay,
When Vice walks forth with her unsoften'd terrors,
And Mirth is madness, and but smiles to slay;
And Hope is nothing but a false delay,
The sick man's lightning half an hour ere death,
When Faintness, the last mortal birth of Pain,
And apathy of limb, the dull beginning
Of the cold staggering race which Death is winning,
Steals vein by vein and pulse by pulse away;
Yet so relieving the o'er-tortured clay,

To him appears renewal of his breath,
And freedom the mere numbness of his chain;—
And then he talks of life, and how again
He feels his spirits soaring—albeit weak,
And of the fresher air, which he would seek;
And as he whispers knows not that he gasps,
That his thin finger feels not what it clasps,
And so the film comes o'er him—and the dizzy
Chamber swims round and round—and shadows busy,
At which he vainly catches, flit and gleam,
Till the last rattle chokes the strangled scream,
And all is ice and blackness,—and the earth
That which it was the moment ere our birth.

II.

There is no hope for nations!—Search the page
Of many thousand years—the daily scene,
The flow and ebb of each recurring age,
The everlasting *to be* which *hath been*,
Hath taught us nought or little: still we lean
On things that rot beneath our weight, and wear
Our strength away in wrestling with the air;
For 'tis our nature strikes us down: the beasts
Slaughter'd in hourly hecatombs for feasts

Are of as high an order—they must go
Even where their driver goads them, though to slaughter.
Ye men, who pour your blood for kings as water,
What have they given your children in return?
A heritage of servitude and woes,
A blindfold bondage, where your hire is blows.
What! do not yet the red-hot ploughshares burn,
O'er which you stumble in a false ordeal,
And deem this proof of loyalty the *real;*
Kissing the hand that guides you to your scars,
And glorying as you tread the glowing bars?
All that your sires have left you, all that Time
Bequeaths of free, and History of sublime,
Spring from a different theme!—Ye see and read,
Admire and sigh, and then succumb and bleed!
Save the few spirits, who, despite of all,
And worse than all, the sudden crimes engender'd
By the down-thundering of the prison-wall,
And thirst to swallow the sweet waters tender'd,
Gushing from Freedom's fountains—when the crowd,
Madden'd with centuries of drought, are loud,
And trample on each other to obtain
The cup which brings oblivion of a chain
Heavy and sore,—in which long yoked they plough'd

The sand,—or if there sprung the yellow grain,
'Twas not for them, their necks were too much bow'd,
And their dead palates chew'd the cud of pain:—
Yes! the few spirits—who, despite of deeds
Which they abhor, confound not with the cause
Those momentary starts from Nature's laws,
Which, like the pestilence and earthquake, smite
But for a term, then pass, and leave the earth
With all her seasons to repair the blight
With a few summers, and again put forth
Cities and generations—fair, when free—
For, Tyranny, there blooms no bud for thee!

III.

Glory and Empire! once upon these towers
With Freedom—godlike Triad! how ye sate!
The league of mightiest nations, in those hours
When Venice was an envy, might abate,
But did not quench, her spirit—in her fate
All were enwrapp'd: the feasted monarchs knew
And loved their hostess, nor could learn to hate,
Although they humbled—with the kingly few
The many felt, for from all days and climes
She was the voyager's worship;—even her crimes

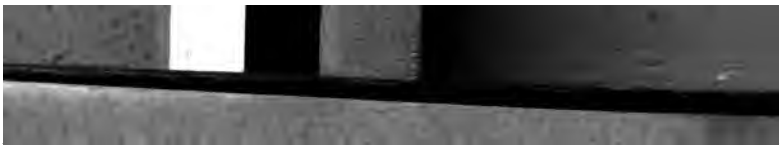
Were of the softer order—born of Love,
She drank no blood, nor fatten'd on the dead,
But gladden'd where her harmless conquests spread;
For these restored the Cross, that from above
Hallow'd her sheltering banners, which incessant
Flew between earth and the unholy Crescent,
Which, if it waned and dwindled, Earth may thank
The city it has clothed in chains, which clank
Now, creaking in the ears of those who owe
The name of Freedom to her glorious struggles;
Yet she but shares with them a common woe,
And call'd the "kingdom" of a conquering foe,—
But knows what all—and, most of all, *we* know—
With what set gilded terms a tyrant juggles!

IV.

The name of Commonwealth is past and gone
O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe;
Venice is crush'd, and Holland deigns to own
A sceptre, and endures the purple robe;
If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone
His chainless mountains, 'tis but for a time,
For tyranny of late is cunning grown,

And in its own good season tramples down
The sparkles of our ashes. One great clime,
Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean
Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion
Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for, and
Bequeath'd—a heritage of heart and hand,
And proud distinction from each other land,
Whose sons must bow them at a monarch's motion,
As if his senseless sceptre were a wand
Full of the magic of exploded science—
Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,
Yet rears her crest, unconquer'd and sublime,
Above the far Atlantic!—She has taught
Her Esau-brethren that the haughty flag,
The floating fence of Albion's feebler crag,
May strike to those whose red right hands have bought
Rights cheaply earn'd with blood. Still, still, for ever
Better, though each man's life-blood were a river,
That it should flow, and overflow, than creep
Through thousand lazy channels in our veins,
Damm'd like the dull canal with locks and chains,
And moving, as a sick man in his sleep,
Three paces, and then faltering:—better be

Where the extinguish'd Spartans still are free,
In their proud charnel of Thermopylæ,
Than stagnate in our marsh,—or o'er the deep
Fly, and one current to the ocean add,
One spirit to the souls our fathers had,
One freeman more, America, to thee!



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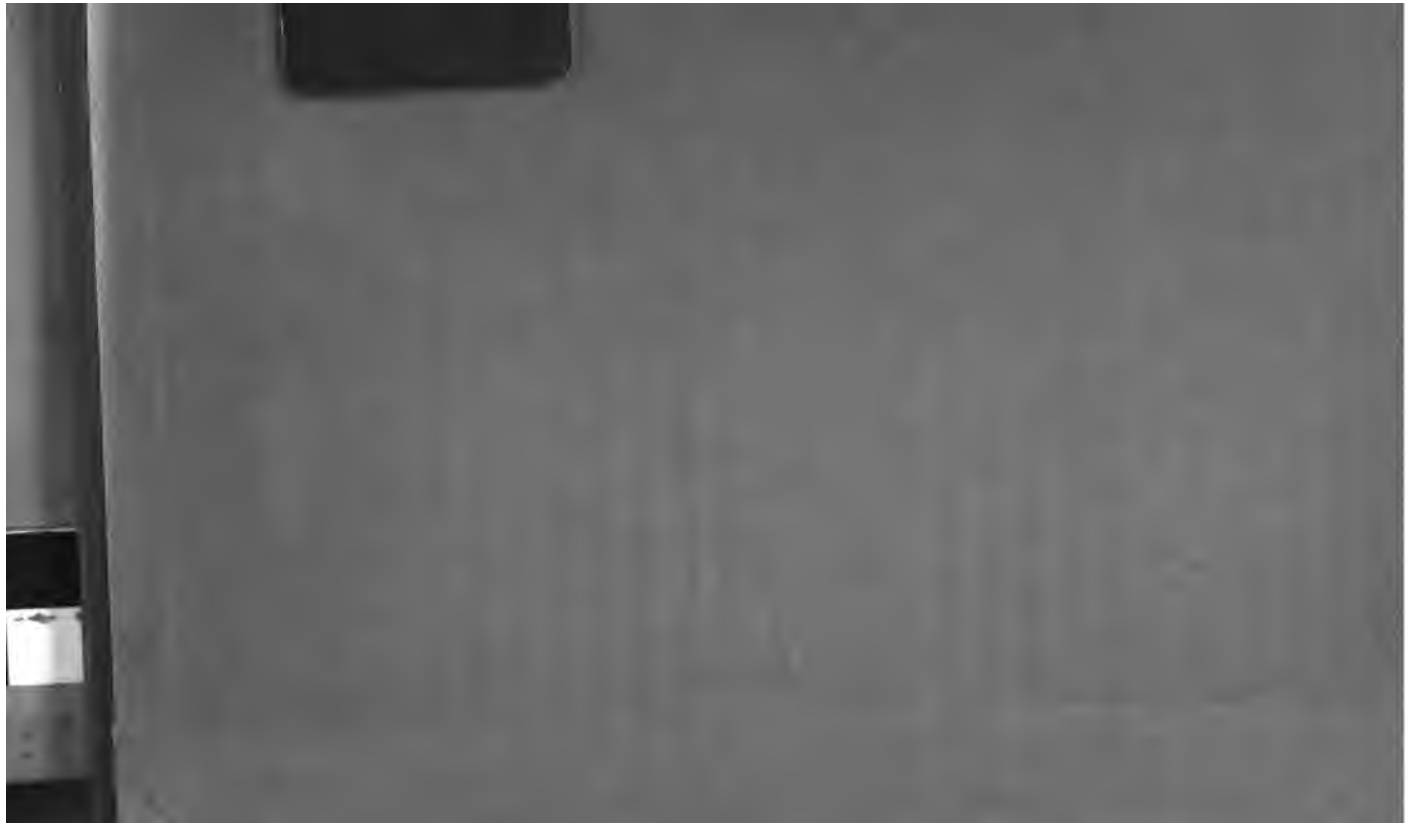
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